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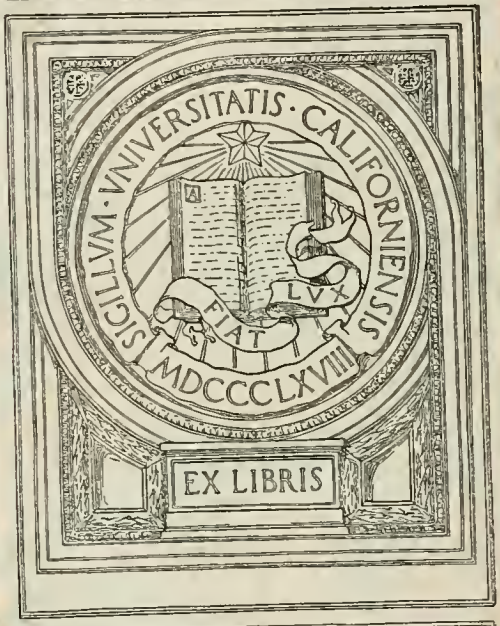

IN MEMORIAM
BERNARD MOSES

THE

WORKS

Of the late RIGHT HONORABLE

HENRY ST. JOHN,

LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

VOL. II.

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A

DISSERTATION

UPON

PARTIES.

To the RIGHT HONORABLE

Sir ROBERT WALPOLE,

KNIGHT of the moſt noble Order of the GARTER, Chancellor and Under-Treaſurer of the EXCHEQUER, firſt Commiſſioner of the TREASURY, and one of his MAJESTY's moſt honorable PRIVY-COUNCIL, &c.

SIR,

AS ſoon as the demand of the public made it neceſſary to collect the following papers together, and to prepare a ſecond edition of them, I took the reſolution of addreſſing them to you. The ſtyle of my dedication will be very different from that, which is commonly employed to perſons in your ſtation. But if you find nothing agreeable in the ſtyle, you may find perhaps ſomething uſeful, ſomething that will deſerve your ſerious reflection, in the matter of it. I ſhall compare you neither to BURLEIGH, nor GODOLPHIN. Let me not prophane the tombs of the dead, to raiſe altars to the living. I ſhall make you no compliments on the wiſdom of your adminiſtration, nor on the wonders you have performed, to the honor and advantage of this kingdom, in the courſe of fourteen, or fifteen years, either at home, or abroad. I ſhall leave theſe copious themes to others, and ſhall confine myſelf to reaſons of another kind, that induced me to this dedication. If theſe reaſons prove ſufficient to convince the public of the extreme propriety of it, I have all that I propoſe to myſelf. Give me leave to preſent to you, in one ſhort view, the general deſign of theſe little eſſays.

They are deſigned then to expoſe the artifice, and to point out the ſeries of misfortunes, by which we were divided formerly into parties, whoſe conteſts brought even the fundamental principles of our conſtitution into queſtion, and whoſe exceſſes brought liberty to the very brink of ruin.

They are deſigned to give true ideas of this conſtitution, and to revive in the minds of men the true ſpirit of it.

They are deſigned to aſſert and vindicate the juſtice and honor of the revolution; of the principles eſtabliſhed, of the means employed, and of the ends obtained by it.

They are deſigned to explode our former diſtinctions, and to unite men of all denominations in the ſupport of theſe principles, in the defence of theſe means, and in the purſuit of theſe ends.

They are deſigned to ſhew how far theſe ends were anſwered at the revolution, or have been anſwered ſince; and by conſequence how much, or how little is wanting, to render that glorious work complete, according to the original plan, and agreeably to the engagements taken, at that time, with the nation.

Let me now appeal to you, ſir---Are theſe deſigns, which any man, who is born a Briton, in any circumſtances, in any ſituation, ought to be aſhamed, or afraid to avow? You cannot think it. You will not ſay it. That never can be the caſe, until we ceaſe to think like freemen, as well as to be free. Are theſe deſigns in favor of the Pretender? I appeal to the whole world; and I ſcorn, with a juſt indignation, to give any other anſwer to ſo ſhameleſs, and ſo ſenſeleſs an objection. No; they are deſigns in favor of the conſtitution; deſigns to ſecure, to fortify,

fortify, to perpetuate that excellent ſyſtem of government. I court no other cauſe; I claim no other merit.

Stet fortuna domûs, et avi numerentur avorum.

Let the illuſtrious and royal houſe, that hath been called to the government of theſe kingdoms, govern them till time ſhall be no more. But let the ſpirit, as well as the letter of the conſtitution, they are intruſted to preſerve, be, as it ought to be, and as we promiſe ourſelves it will be, the ſole rule of their government, and the ſole ſupport of their power: and whatever happens in the various courſe of human contingencies, whatever be the fate of particular perſons, of houſes, or families, let the liberties of Great Britain be immortal.

They will be ſo, if that conſtitution, whoſe genuine effects they are, be maintained in purity and vigor. A perpetual attention to this great point is therefore the intereſt and duty of every man in Britain; and there is ſcarce any man, who may not contribute to the advancement of it, in ſome degree. The old may inform the young, and the young may animate the old. Even they, who are moſt retired from the ſcene of buſineſs, may be uſeful in this cauſe, to thoſe, who are in it; to thoſe, who are heated by the action, diſtracted by the cares, or diſſipated by the pleaſures of the world. I ſay, they may be uſeful: and I add, that they ought to be ſo to the utmoſt that their ſituation allows. Government is the buſineſs of thoſe, who are appointed to govern, and of thoſe, who are appointed to controul them. But the Britiſh conſtitution is the buſineſs of every Briton. It is ſo more particularly, indeed, of perſons raiſed, like you, to the higheſt poſts in the government. You lie under particular obligations of this kind, beſides the general engagements of intereſt and duty, that are

common

common to all: and a neglect in others would be a breach of truſt in you. We ſay that our kings can do no wrong. The maxim is wiſely eſtabliſhed, and ought to be followed, no doubt, as far as the conduct of princes renders the obſervance of it practicable. But from the eſtabliſhment of this maxim reſults the neceſſity of another, without which the exerciſe of the executive power would remain under no controul. Tho our kings can do no wrong, and tho they cannot be called to account by any form our conſtitution preſcribes; their miniſters may. They are anſwerable for the adminiſtration of the government; each for his particular part, and the prime, or ſole miniſter, when there happens to be one, for the whole. He is ſo the more, and the more juſtly, if he hath affected to render himſelf ſo, by uſurping on his fellows; by wrigling, intriguing, whiſpering, and bargaining himſelf into this dangerous poſt, to which he was not called by the general ſuffrage, nor perhaps by the deliberate choice of his maſter himſelf. It follows then that miniſters are anſwerable for every thing done to the prejudice of the conſtitution, in the ſame proportion as the preſervation of the conſtitution in its purity and vigor, or the perverting and weakening it, are of greater conſequence to the nation than any other inſtances of good, or bad government.

Believe me, ſir, a reverence for the conſtitution, and a conſcientious regard to the preſervation of it, are in the political, like charity in the religious ſyſtem, a cloak to hide a multitude of ſins: and as the performance of all other religious duties will not avail in the ſight of God, without charity, ſo neither will the diſcharge of all other miniſterial duties avail in the ſight of men, without a faithful diſcharge of this principal duty. Should a miniſter govern in various inſtances of domeſtic and foreign management, ignorantly, weakly, or even

wickedly; and yet pay this reverence, and bear this regard to the conſtitution, he would deſerve certainly much better quarter, and would meet with it too from every man of ſenſe and honor, than a miniſter, who ſhould conduct the adminiſtration with great ability and ſucceſs, and ſhould at the ſame time procure and abet, or even connive at ſuch indirect violations of the rules of the conſtitution as tend to the deſtruction of it, or even at ſuch evaſions as tend to render it uſeleſs. A miniſter, who had the ill qualities of both theſe, and the good ones of neither; who made his adminiſtration hateful in ſome reſpects, and deſpicable in others; who ſought that ſecurity by ruining the conſtitution, which he had forfeited by diſhonoring the government; who encouraged the profligate, and ſeduced the unwary, to concur with him in this deſign, by affecting to explode all public ſpirit, and to ridicule every form of our conſtitution; ſuch a miniſter would be looked upon moſt juſtly as the ſhame and ſcourge of his country; ſooner or later he would fall without pity; and it is hard to ſay what puniſhment would be proportionable to his crimes.------To conclude this head therefore; ſince the obligations of intereſt and duty on every man, eſpecially on every miniſter, and more eſpecially ſtill on a prime, or ſole miniſter, to reverence the conſtitution, to conform his conduct to it, and neither to invade, nor ſuffer it to be invaded by others, are ſo undeniable, and ſo ſtrong; and ſince the means, which the miniſter's power gives him to preſerve it in purity and vigor, or to corrupt and weaken it, are ſo many; nothing could be more proper than a dedication to one, in your exalted ſtation, of papers, that are written to explain this intereſt, and to enforce this duty, and to preſs them on the underſtanding and conſcience of every man in Britain; but of him moſt, who is moſt concerned.

After

After the general reaſons, that have been given, and ſuggeſted, for addreſſing this dedication to you, give me leave to deſcend into ſome, that are a little more particular, and that regard the man, as well as the miniſter.

If the principles of the revolution, and the means employed in it, have not been vindicated by me, with as great force of reaſon and eloquence, as they were by you, in a famous oration you made at SACHEVEREL's tryal, they have been vindicated however to the beſt of my power. The cauſe is the ſame, tho the performances are not equal: and ſince the cauſe is the ſame, the cauſe will recommend my writings to your good opinion, how little ſoever you may like the advocate. But I have ſomething more to urge in my own favor. You had a ſermon to condemn, and a parſon to roaſt; for that, I think, was the decent language of the time: and, to carry on the allegory, you roaſted him at ſo fierce a fire, that you burnt yourſelves. Your arguments being confined to the propoſitions this preacher had advanced, you may ſeem rather to have juſtified reſiſtance, or the means employed to bring about the revolution, than the revolution: for tho the principles of the revolution were, and muſt for ever remain true, and tho the means were juſt, and will for ever be ſo, in caſes of the like nature; yet true principles, and juſt means, require to be farther ſanctified by their ends. The man, who ſhould affect the greateſt zeal for the principles then eſtabliſhed, and the means then uſed, would deſerve, I think, to be ranked among the falſe brethren, and would prove himſelf a treacherous, and a mercenary friend to the revolution, if he ſhewed any indifference about the ends obtained, or endeavoured in any manner to defeat thoſe, that were intended to be obtained by it. The people, who run ſo great a riſque, and bring about ſo great an

event, in order to reſtore their conſtitution, and to ſecure their liberties againſt dangers of every kind, and eſpecially againſt thoſe which recent experience hath taught them to apprehend, have ſurely a good right to the whole benefit of ſuch a revolution; and they cannot be deprived of any part of this benefit, or left expoſed to any ſhadow of the ſame dangers, by any rule of juſtice, or good policy.

Such conſiderations as theſe made me think that, to aſſert and vindicate fully the honor and juſtice of the revolution, it was neceſſary that the ends of the revolution ſhould be inſiſted upon in my arguments, whether they were ſo or not in yours; and that the importance of the ſubject, as well as the difference of the occaſions, for the whole lay open before me, would be a ſufficient reaſon for ſupplying in the copy what was wanting in the original. I have endeavored therefore to ſhew how much our conſtitution hath been improved, how far our liberties have been better ſecured by the revolution, and how little is wanting to compleat that glorious deſign, and to render the Britiſh conſtitution the moſt perfect ſyſtem of a free government, that was ever eſtabliſhed in the world. If all the ends of the revolution are already obtained, it is not only impertinent to argue for obtaining any of them, but factious deſigns might be imputed, and the name of incendiary be applied with ſome color, perhaps, to any one, who ſhould perſiſt in preſſing this point. On the other hand, if any of theſe ends have not been fully obtained, the reproach of faction and the title of incendiary will belong to every perſon who raiſes a conteſt by his oppoſition to theſe inſtances, and who endeavors to make the friends of the conſtitution paſs for enemies to the government. Thus it is eaſy to join iſſue: and when iſſue is once joined, it cannot be difficult to decide. If a principal end of the revolution was to ſecure the nation for the future againſt all

the dangers, to which liberty, as well as religion, had been expoſed before the revolution; if one of theſe dangers aroſe from the corruption, that had been employed to create a dependency of the two houſes of parliament on the crown; if this corruption might have ſucceeded very probably then, had the means been ſufficient to ſupport it; if no proviſion was made, at the revolution, to ſecure the independency of the two houſes, and the freedom of elections, againſt corruption; if no proviſion hath been made againſt this danger, ſince the revolution, proportionable to that increaſe of the poſſible means of corruption, which hath happened ſince the revolution, by the increaſe of the revenue of the crown, of debts, of taxes, of officers, and powers to raiſe theſe taxes; if all this be ſo, and the whole merits of the cauſe may be ſafely reſted there, how can it be pretended that all the ends of the revolution have been already obtained? They have not moſt certainly. When, and in what manner, they ſhall be obtained, it would be preſumption in any private perſons ſo much as to inſinuate. They may repreſent ſuch things as they judge to be of uſe to the public, and may ſupport their repreſentations by all the reaſons, that have determined their opinions. Thus far their province extends. All beyond this belongs to their ſuperiors; and, in the caſe before us, to the wiſdom of the nation aſſembled in parliament. This however I would add; that as a conſiſtency of character ſeems to exact from you a zeal for obtaining all the ends of the revolution, ſuitable to that which you have expreſſed for the principles it eſtabliſhed, and the means it employed; ſo the particular obligations you lie under to promote the honor and intereſt of his preſent Majeſty, and of his royal family, ſeem to exact the ſame: for, after all, the revolution is the foundation of the preſent ſettlement; whatever ſtrengthens the foundation, ſtrengthens the ſuperſtructure; and there can be no need of going about to prove that to obtain all the

ends

ends of the revolution is to ſtrengthen that foundation. The arguments, that prevailed formerly with many againſt the principles and means of the revolution, are quite exploded; the prejudices againſt them are quite worn out. We may therefore perſuade, without flattering ourſelves, that the foundation of our preſent ſettlement, and of all our future national happineſs, is laid immoveably in theſe two reſpects. Shall it not be ſo, and does it not become you, in a particular manner, to endeavor that it ſhould be ſo, in every reſpect? Could you forgive yourſelf, if you neglected the firſt opportunity of concurring to remove the leaſt pretence from the diſaffected, nay from the well-affected, to ſay that the ends of particular men, of parties, and of families, have been anſwered by the revolution, even beyond their ſeveral expectations; but that the national expectations have not been ſo fully anſwered, nor the ends of the revolution entirely obtained? No man knows better than you the truth and force of what hath been here advanced. No man therefore is able to make a juſter application of it to the moſt important intereſts of your country, to the true intereſt of your royal maſter, and to your private intereſt too; if that will add, as I preſume it will, ſome weight to the ſcale; and if that requires, as I preſume it does, a regard to futurity, as well as to the preſent moment. Upon the whole matter therefore, I cannot but expect that you ſhould receive favorably an addreſs, made ſo properly, and in which, if I have preſſed you a little warmly, yet I have done it with the decency that every gentleman owes to another, at leaſt to himſelf. You will allow me, and every friend of the revolution and of liberty, leave to hope that the time is coming, when you will not oppoſe, or ſhall not have it in your power to oppoſe, the endeavors of thoſe, who promote the entire completion of all the ends propoſed by the firſt, and the full ſecurity of the laſt. Whenever this happens; whenever the independency of the

two houſes of parliament, and the uninfluenced and uninfluenceable freedom of elections are once effectually ſecured againſt the dangers that may ariſe poſſibly hereafter from the growth of corruption; then will all our future kings be reduced to the agreeable neceſſity of eſtabliſhing their thrones, as we are obliged to acknowledge that the throne is now eſtabliſhed, not on the narrow and ſandy foundations of court-craft, and unconſtitutional expedients, but on the popularity of the prince, and the univerſal affection of the ſubjects: foundations of the kingly authority ſo evidently ſuppoſed by our conſtitution, that a king, who will add weight to his ſceptre, muſt govern by them, or govern againſt this conſtitution, againſt the very rule of his government.

I am now come to the laſt reaſon, drawn from the ſubject of theſe writings, that I ſhall trouble you with, for dedicating them to you. The attempt to extinguiſh the animoſities, and even the names of thoſe parties that diſtracted the nation ſo long, ſo fatally at firſt, and ſo fooliſhly at laſt, intitles this volume to your kind reception of it, at leaſt, as properly as the attempt to expoſe the dangers that may poſſibly ariſe hereafter, from corruption, to the independency of parliament, and to the freedom of elections. Whilſt a real difference of principles and deſigns ſupported the diſtinction, we were divided into national parties: and this was misfortune enough. It was lamented as a great one, at the time, by every good man of every party. But if the diſtinction ſhould remain, when the difference ſubſiſts no longer, the misfortune would be ſtill greater; becauſe they, who maintained the diſtinction, in this caſe, would ceaſe to be a party, and would become a faction. National intereſts would be no longer concerned; at leaſt, on one ſide. They would be ſometimes ſacrificed, and always made ſubordinate to perſonal intereſts: and that, I think, is the

the true characteriſtic of faction. This attempt therefore ought to have your approbation. To dedicate it to you may be conſtrued to ſuppoſe that it will have your approbation: and he, who ſuppoſes that it will, makes you no indifferent compliment.

When the court fomented our national diviſions, the very worſt deſigns were carried on: for to divide can never be an expedient for good purpoſes, any more than to corrupt; ſince the peace and proſperity of a nation will always depend on uniting, as far as poſſible, the heads, hearts and hands of the whole people, and on improving, not debauching their morals. "Divide et impera," is a maxim often quoted. How are we to apply it? There is no place for it in arbitrary governments; for in them, the intereſt of the governors requires that a ſervile union, if it may be called an union, ſhould be maintained by the weight of power, like that of ſlaves in a galley, who are united by their chains, and who tug the oar together, at the ſound of a whiſtle. In free governments, it can have place as little, whilſt they, who are at the head, intend the maintenance of liberty. To what caſe then can it be applied? There is but one, and that is the caſe of thoſe, who aſpire at more power than a free conſtitution of government gives them. Such governors muſt divide and incenſe parties one againſt another, that they may be always able to bribe the paſſions of one ſide, and ſo uſurp on both. But the prince who purſues this method, riſques the power he hath for a power he does not want. He would be the more inexcuſeable, under ſuch a conſtitution as ours; becauſe, if he could not gain eſteem by his great, he might gain affection by his good qualities: and this principle would carry him, even better perhaps than the other, to the power he would obtain. What can a prince deſire more than to be placed at the head of an united people;

people; among whom he may have as many friends as he pleaſes, and can have no enemies, unleſs he creates them, by ſuppoſing them to be ſuch, and by treating them accordingly? If the deſigns of a prince, in fomenting the diviſions, are to invade the liberties of his people, his deſigns are laid in the utmoſt iniquity: and if theſe are not his deſigns, they muſt be laid in the utmoſt folly. When a people ſubmits quietly to government, and is willing to obey on the terms on which alone their prince hath a right to command, how extravagant muſt his demands be, and how unaccountable his conduct, to divide ſuch a people? Shall he expect, for inſtance, that all his people ſhould think like him and his council, about every occurrence, about every meaſure he takes, and every man he employs: and ſince this is too much to aſk of freemen, nay of ſlaves, if his expectation be not anſwered, ſhall he form a laſting diviſion upon ſuch tranſient motives? Shall he proſcribe every man, as an enemy to his government, who diſlikes the adminiſtration of it? Proſcriptions are abominable, and inhuman, when they are backed by a fulneſs of arbitrary power. But to hang up the tables of proſcription, without the power of ſending centurions to cut off every head that wears a face diſliked at court, would be madneſs in a prince. Such a conduct cannot ſuit his intereſt, however it may his paſſions, in any circumſtance whatever. There are indeed circumſtances, wherein it may ſuit the intereſt of a miniſter. Till the ſword of civil war be drawn, a prince can ſcarce become irreconcileable with his people, and be reduced, for want of national ſtrength, to ſupport his power and dignity by the force of faction. But a miniſter may fall eaſily, and ſoon, into this deſperate ſtate: and after fomenting, as long as he could, the diviſions of parties, he may have no refuge but in faction. There may be ſuch a conduct, as no national party will bear, or at leaſt will juſtify. But faction hath no regard to national intereſts. Faction therefore

ſore will bear any thing, ſhare in any thing, juſtify any thing. If the miniſter, who takes this method to ſupport himſelf, hath any art, he will endeavor to diſguiſe his faction under the name and appearance of a national party. But even this diſguiſe will ſoon fall off. The beſt of thoſe, who were engaged in the party, will quit the faction, and then the latter muſt ſtand confeſſed to public view. But it is not only the criminal conduct of a miniſter, and the fear of reſting his adminiſtration on the national judgment, that may oblige him to govern by diviſion, and by faction. As the moſt oppoſite notions are often united in the head, ſo are the moſt contrary ſentiments in the heart of man. Incapacity often begets ſufficiency; and yet a conſciouſneſs of incapacity often begets a jealouſy of power, grounded on a ſenſe of the ſuperior merit of other men. The miniſter, who grows leſs by his elevation, like a little ſtatue placed on a mighty pedeſtal, will always have this jealouſy ſtrong about him. He muſt of courſe ſelect a faction to himſelf; and this faction muſt be compoſed, to anſwer his purpoſes, of men ſervilely obſequious, or extremely inferior to him by their talents. Whenever this happens, the reign of venality, of proſtitution, of ignorance, of futility, and of dulneſs commences. The miniſter will dread to ſee the perſons employed whom he ſecretly eſteems, for this very reaſon, becauſe he eſteems them. Abilities to ſerve the commonwealth will be an objection ſufficient to outweigh the ſtrongeſt proofs of attachment to the perſon of the prince, and of zeal for his government; nay, even the merit of a whole life ſpent in giving theſe proofs. In ſhort, the very reaſons that ſhould determine the prince to employ men, will determine the miniſter to proſcribe them. Diſlike, or contempt of him, will paſs with his maſter for diſaffection to the government; and, under this pompous name of government, will nothing but the paultry intereſt, or humor, of the miniſter be couched. The miniſter will reap, perhaps, for even

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that may be doubtful, the immediate benefit of dividing, or maintaining the diviſions of the nation, and of nurſing up faction, by continuing longer in power, his ſole ſecurity, and, by deferring, if not eſcaping, the evil day, the day of account and retribution. But the prince will reap, in this caſe, the permanent miſchief of eſtabliſhing diviſion and faction; and may poſſibly make the lamentable exchange of his own popularity, for his miniſter's impunity. I need not finiſh up this picture of imagination, ſince I write to you, who know ſo much better than I pretend to do the characters of men, and the arts of government. It is ſufficient that I have hinted at the general cauſes and effects of the endeavors, that are ſometimes uſed, and to which Great Britain hath not been a ſtranger, to foment national diviſions, and to govern by the faction of a miniſter, armed with the power of the prince, againſt the ſenſe and ſpirit of a nation, and the intereſt of the prince himſelf This may ſerve; and it is all I ſhall ſay, to beſpeak your approbation of the papers that follow, on account of the matter they contain.

But, ſir, the reaſons I have given, how pertinent ſoever they may be, are not the only reaſons I had for addreſſing myſelf, in this manner, and upon this occaſion, to you There are reaſons of another kind; reaſons, that come ſtill more home to yourſelf; reaſons, that appear very important to me, and that will appear ſo to you, perhaps, when you have reflected duely on them, and have weighed impartially the conſequences of them. I ſhall preſs theſe reaſons with all the plainneſs and force that decency permits, in ſo public and perſonal an application; becauſe, tho truth may ſometimes offend, I am very indifferent to offences taken with truth on my ſide. If you hearken to truth, which men in your ſtation ſeldom hear, you may be the better for it. If you do not, the author of this

this dedication cannot be the worſe: for I will add, upon this occaſion, that whoever he is, he is one you cannot impoſe upon, in your private capacity, neither as a man, nor as a gentleman; and that you can as little do it, in your public capacity. You cannot diſappoint him; becauſe the temper of his mind gives you no hold on him. He hath neither avarice to make him deſire riches, nor ambition to make him deſire power, nor vanity to make him deſire honors. You cannot oppreſs him; becauſe he is free from guilt, and from every probable, for no man is free from every poſſible, imputation of guilt. The laws of his country are his protection; and they are ſufficient to protect every Briton, who reverences and obeys them, in how peculiar a ſituation ſoever he may be found. They, who act againſt theſe laws, and they alone, may have reaſon to fear, let their ſituation be never ſo high, or their preſent power never ſo great.

Having ſaid this, I proceed to obſerve to you, that you are in the right moſt certainly to retort by yourſelf, or others, in the beſt and ſmarteſt manner that you, or they can, whatever the writings publiſhed in the * Craftſman may contain, which you judge to be injurious to yourſelf, or reflecting on your adminiſtration. The public will judge uprightly upon the whole matter. The laughers will be for thoſe who have moſt wit, and the ſerious part of mankind for thoſe who have moſt reaſon on their ſide. Again. As to affairs of peace, or war, public occurrences, domeſtic management, foreign negotiations, in ſhort, the news of the day, and the current buſineſs of the time, weekly and daily papers, or more elaborate, anniverſary treatiſes, are properly employed by you to explain, in your own favor, the ſeries of your conduct; to refute CALEB;

* A political paper publiſhed weekly at that time, under the aſſumed name of CALEB D'ANVERS.

or, which is ſtill more eaſy, and by ſome thought as uſeful, to keep up the cavil on one point, till a new one is ſtarted, that draws off the attention of the world. All this may be called fair war; and whoever prevails in the judgment of the public, the public will reap information from the conteſt, and will have reaſon to be pleaſed with theſe appeals, which preſent an image of the cuſtom that obtained in the antient commonwealths of Greece and Rome, where the greateſt intereſts of the ſtate were debated, and the greateſt men in thoſe governments were accuſed and defended, in public harangues, and before the whole people.

But the writings of the Craftſman have not been confined to theſe ſubjects that are perſonal, or temporary. The cauſe of the Britiſh conſtitution hath been pleaded through the whole courſe of theſe papers; every danger to it hath been pointed out; every ſecurity, or improvement of it, hath been explained and preſſed.----Now here, ſir, begins my complaint. I ſaid that the cauſe of our conſtitution hath been pleaded in the Craftſman; and I am ſorry that the expreſſion is ſo preciſely juſt, that no other would come up to the caſe. The cauſe of the conſtitution hath been pleaded; for the conſtitution hath been attacked; openly, inſolently attacked, and is ſo every day by thoſe, againſt whom the Craftſman ſo often employs his pen. Who could have expected, for I will give an inſtance or two, who could have expected, at this time, and under the preſent eſtabliſhment, to hear the neceſſity of maintaining ſtanding armies, in times of peace, even againſt the people of Britain who maintain them, contended for and aſſerted?---Who could have expected to hear a dependency, a corrupt dependency of the parliament on the crown, contended for and aſſerted to be a neceſſary expedient to ſupply a want of power, which is falſely ſuppoſed in the crown; as if our fathers had oppoſed, and

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at length deſtroyed that chimaera, called prerogative, formerly ſo dangerous to our liberties, for no other reaſon but to furniſh arguments for letting looſe upon us another monſter, more dangerous to our liberties by far?---Who could have expected that attempts to revive the doctrines of old whiggiſm, and the principles and ſpirit of the revolution, in oppoſition to ſuch manifeſt contradictions of them all, would give any umbrage, or cauſe any alarm, among men, who ſtill affect to call themſelves whigs, and pretend zeal for a government, that is founded on the revolution, and could not have been eſtabliſhed without it?---This could not have been expected, I think; and yet ſo it is. There are perſons, who take to themſelves the title of miniſterial writers, and have ſometimes the front to aſſume that of writers for the government. Theſe perſons are not content to ring, in daily panegyric, encomiums on the wiſdom and virtue, the juſtice and clemency, the ſucceſs and triumphs of your adminiſtration; and to anſwer, or to attempt to anſwer, the almoſt innumerable objections, that have been made, it matters not here whether juſtly, or unjuſtly, to your conduct at home, and your own, and that of your brother abroad: but they take fire, they ſhew an alarm, and they grow angry, whenever any thing is written, nay when a word is dropt, in favor of the fundamental articles of Britiſh liberty. Sometimes they argue directly, and in plain terms, againſt them. Sometimes they perplex and puzzle the cauſe; evade what they cannot deny; and, when they cannot impoſe a fallacy, endeavor at leaſt to hinder men from diſcerning a truth. Thus, ſir, they mingle your juſtification with the condemnation of our conſtitution; and labor, as much as in them lies, to make your preſervation and the deſtruction of this conſtitution a common cauſe. If you could poſſibly doubt the truth of what is here advanced, I might refer you to the particular pamphlets and papers, which are known at leaſt by the anſwers, that have

been given to them, till ſuch time as an extract of all the paſſages, hinted at here, be made public, as I hope it will; and whenever it is, I dare appeal before-hand to your private thoughts, whether the principles they contain, and the conſequences deducible from them, would not deſtroy, if they were to take place, the whole ſcheme of the Britiſh conſtitution. It hath been aſked, why do the writers on one ſide eternally harp on liberty, and the conſtitution? Do they mean to inſtil jealouſy and diſtruſt, and to alienate the minds of the people? In what inſtances have the laws been broken, or hath the conſtitution been invaded by thoſe who govern? Theſe queſtions deſerve an anſwer; and I ſhall anſwer the firſt, by aſking another queſtion. Why do the writers on one ſide eternally labor to explain away liberty, and to diſtinguiſh us out of our conſtitution? If nothing had been ſaid of this kind, I am perſuaded that much leſs would have been ſaid of the other; and I can aſſure you, with great truth, that the public had not been troubled, particularly, with this diſſertation upon parties. As to the other two queſtions, they may be taken together. There is a plain and real difference between jealouſy and diſtruſt, that may be obſerved in the preſent caſe. Men may be jealous, on account of their liberties, and I think they ought to be ſo, even when they have no immediate diſtruſt that the perſons who govern, deſign to invade them. An opportunity of invading them opened, is reaſon ſufficient for awakening the jealouſy; and if the perſons, who have this jealouſy, apply to thoſe who govern, to help to cure it, by removing the opportunity, the latter may take this, if they pleaſe, as a mark of confidence, not diſtruſt: at leaſt, it will be in their power, and ſurely it will be for their intereſt, to ſhew that they deſerved confidence, in this caſe, not diſtruſt. But it will be always trifling, and fooliſh, to aſk what laws have been broken, what invaſions on the conſtitution have been made; becauſe as nothing

of this ſort will be done, when there are no deſigns dangerous to the conſtitution carried on; ſo when there are ſuch deſigns, whatever is done of this ſort will be private, indirect, and ſo covered, that the greateſt moral certainty may be deſtitute of proof. Whenever any of theſe things are done publicly, directly, and in a manner to be eaſily proved, the danger will be over, the conſtitution will be deſtroyed, and all fear for it and concern about it will be impertinent, becauſe they will come too late. If ever that old trite maxim, "principiis "obſta," was well applied, it is ſo in the caſe we ſpeak of here.

The reaſons I have given for mentioning theſe writers ought to excuſe me for it; at leaſt, to you; and even to you I ſhall ſay very little more about them. The flowers they gather at Billingſgate, to adorn and enliven their productions, ſhall be paſſed over by me, without any reflection. They aſſume the privilege of watermen and oyſter-women. Let them enjoy it in that good company, and excluſively of all other perſons. They cauſe no ſcandal; they give no offence; they raiſe no ſentiment but contempt in the breaſts of thoſe they attack; and it is to be hoped, for the honor of thoſe whom they would be thought to defend, that they raiſe, by this low and dirty practice, no other ſentiment in them. But there is another part of their proceeding, which may be attributed by malicious people to you, and which deſerves for that reaſon alone ſome place in this dedication, as it might be ſome motive to the writing of it. When ſuch authors grow ſcurrilous, it would be highly unjuſt to impute their ſcurrillity to any prompter; becauſe they have in themſelves all that is neceſſary to conſtitute a ſcold; ill manners, impudence, a foul mouth, and a fouler heart. But when they menace, they riſe a note higher. They cannot do this in their own names. Men may be apt to con-

conclude therefore that they do it in the name, as they affect to do it on the behalf, of the perſon, in whoſe cauſe they deſire to be thought retained. Many examples of theſe menaces might be quoted, and moſt of them would be found directed againſt one particular perſon. After employing the whole impotence of their rhetoric againſt him, and venting for many years together, almoſt without notice on his part, as much calumny as their imaginations could furniſh, a pamphlet hath been lately publiſhed, the profeſſed deſign of which is to call for a vigorous proceeding in parliament againſt this man. To introduce this propoſal, it is preceded by a long ſeries of facts; ſome notoriouſly falſe; ſome, which it is impoſſible ſhould be true; others, which it is impoſſible this writer ſhould know to be true, if they were ſo; and others again, not only deſtitute of proof, but even of probability. Such accuſations muſt be brought by ſome * creature, of ſo notoriouſly proſtituted a conſcience, that his evidence would be rejected in any common cauſe, and ſhould not be refuted therefore by me, if I was concerned to refute him. But, ſir, if I take notice of this libel, or refer to others of the ſame kind, it is not done out of regard to theſe authors, whom I deſpiſe, as I am perſuaded the perſon does, againſt whom all the virulence of their malice is directed. My concern, upon this occaſion, is for you alone, and you will allow me to repreſent what that concern dictates. It is poſſible that you may have very ſtrong reſentments againſt this perſon, and he againſt you. It is poſſible that you may have ſhewn yours, and he may have ſhewn his, according to the different circumſtances you have been in, and the different opportunities you have had. But this will not become a matter of ſtate, tho you are a miniſter of ſtate. The public will eſpouſe your paſſions no more than his; nor concern itſelf to enquire who gave the firſt occaſion to theſe reſentments; who

* See the grand accuſer, &c. p. 77.

hath

hath acted the part of a fair, and who of a treacherous enemy. It is, I doubt, too certain that the public hath been employed ſometimes to revenge private quarrels, and to ſerve the low turns of envy, or jealouſy. But, in all theſe caſes, the public hath been impoſed upon; theſe motives have been concealed; others have been pretended; and the others have been of a public nature alone; becauſe the bare ſuſpicion of any private intereſt, or paſſion, in a public proſecution is ſufficient, and moſt juſtly ſo, to create invincible prejudices to it. The ſcribblers I ſpeak of have laid you therefore under great diſadvantages, notwithſtanding your elevation, and your power, whether you deſign any thing againſt the perſon ſo obnoxious to you, or not. They ſhould have concealed induſtriouſly, what they have affected to proclaim; ſince it is certain that, how great ſoever your popularity in the nation may be, they will never bring up mankind to think that any perſon ſhould be proſecuted by methods extraordinary, or even ordinary, purely for your eaſe, your pleaſure, or your ſafety. If they could prove, what they frequently throw out, that every man is a friend to the pretender, who is not a friend to you; and that he, who objects to your conduct in the adminiſtration, endeavors to pull down the preſent government, and ſet up another; then, indeed, they might raiſe a ſpirit againſt this particular perſon, for aught I know; but moſt certainly againſt many others, of much greater conſequence, who appear every day, in the face of the world, not to be your friends, and who make no ſcruple of objecting, with the utmoſt freedom, to your conduct. But ſuch aſſertions as theſe will only ſerve to make men angry, or laugh. They, who have the beſt opinion of your abilities, will no more agree that the preſent eſtabliſhment is ſupported, than that it was made, by you. They will never be wanting in their reſpect to the crown ſo much, as to confound the cauſe of the king with the cauſe of his miniſter; or to

ſup-

ſuppoſe that the reins of government would grow weaker in his majeſty's hand, if you was out of power, or out of the world --- In ſhort, ſir, you may paſs, and I believe you do paſs juſtly, for a man of extreme good parts, and for a miniſter of much experience; but you would not deſire, I think, to be repreſented as the ATLAS who ſupports this ſtate; and your brother will not certainly paſs for the HERCULES who relieves you, and who ſuſtains, in his turn, the important burthen.

I know very well that ſomething is added to ſupply, if that were poſſible, this defect, and to make the cauſe more plauſible. It is pretended that the writings imputed to this particular perſon, and ſeveral others publiſh'd in the Craftſman, contain reflections of a very extravagant, indecent, and even ſeditious nature; ſuch as they alone, who are capable of ſuppoſing them, are capable of making. But then theſe reflections are to be proved by the conſtructions, which the accuſers make of the expreſſions employed by thoſe, whom they accuſe; conſtructions as arbitrary, and as forced, as many of thoſe, by which ſome of the beſt men at Rome were brought within the interpretation of the law of majeſty, by ſome of the worſt. Examples of much the ſame ſort have been ſet even in Britain, whilſt the practice prevailed of ſuppoſing innuendo's, and parallels, and oblique meanings, and proſecuting and condemning men on ſuppoſitions, and interpretations. But there is no room to fear that any ſuch examples ſhould be renewed, whilſt * a Britiſh ſpirit prevails in a Britiſh parliament. Whilſt that ſpirit prevails, no parliament will condemn any man upon principles, which parliaments have always condemned as unjuſt and tyrannical. Leſs than any will they condemn thoſe, who write in defence of this conſtitution, at the requeſt and on the inſtances of thoſe who attack it. A Britiſh ſpirit and the

* See ſome conſiderations concerning the public funds, &c. p. 98.

ſpirit

ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution are one and the ſame; and therefore * if ever there ariſes a Britiſh ſpirit in a Britiſh parliament, of which I preſume no doubt ought to be made at this time, vengeance will not overtake the former; it may be the latter.

What hath been ſaid might ſuffice to ſhew how fooliſh and vain it is to throw out menaces againſt thoſe who have nothing to fear, at a time, when zeal to preſerve the conſtitution in every part inviolate ſeems daily to increaſe. But ſince I have entered on the ſubject, and the matter ſeems of ſome concernment to you, give me leave to add one conſideration more, that may ſerve to ſhew how fooliſh and vain ſuch a proceeding would be, even at any other time.---Let us ſuppoſe that the very perſon pointed at was, and could be proved to be, the author of this diſſertation upon parties, for inſtance, which I now dedicate to you. Let us ſuppoſe that the reſolution was taken to follow the generous and equitable advice of the pamphlet-writer, who thinks he ought to be proceeded againſt in a peculiar manner. Let us even ſuppoſe that we lived in an age, when parliaments were brought, in ſome degree, under that very dependency, againſt which ſo much is ſaid in this diſſertation. In ſhort, let us ſuppoſe that the moſt innocent man, who was obnoxious to thoſe in power, might have reaſonable grounds to fear an exorbitant exerciſe of this power againſt him. But then let us make one ſingle ſuppoſition on the other ſide. Let us ſuppoſe that this obnoxious man was really in earneſt; that he wrote from his heart; and that he felt there the ſame warmth for the Britiſh conſtitution, which he expreſſed in his writings, and laboured to infuſe into the breaſt of every other man. I would aſk you, ſir, do you think ſuch a man would be aſhamed to avow, in the face of his country, the contents

* Ib.

of the following ſheets, or be afraid to ſuffer for them? Could any eloquence, even yours, if you would employ it ſo unworthily, expect, by the help of falſe ſurmiſes, and invidious comments, the baſe inventions of little railers, to make him paſs for an enemy to the preſent eſtabliſhment, who had proved himſelf a friend to that conſtitution, in conſequence of which, and for the ſake of which alone, this eſtabliſhment was made? Would his endeavors to reconcile parties, and to aboliſh odious diſtinctions; would pleading for the attainment of all the ends propoſed by, and promiſed at the revolution; for ſecuring the independency of the two houſes of parliament, and the freedom of elections, as effectually againſt corruption, as they are already ſecured againſt prerogative; would this, I ſay, make him paſs for the greateſt of criminals? No, ſir, not in the breaſts even of thoſe who gave ſentence againſt him, if men capable of giving ſuch a ſentence could be found. Among the reſt of mankind his innocency would be acknowledged; his conſtancy would be applauded; his accuſers, and his grand accuſer in the firſt place, would paſs alone for criminal. He might fall a victim to power; but truth, and reaſon, and the cauſe of liberty would fall with him; and he who is buried in their ruins, is happier than he who ſurvives them. Thus I am perſuaded the perſon here intended would be found, upon trial, to think. The event therefore of ſuch a proſecution, whatever it might be, could not turn to his diſadvantage; and conſequently to threaten him with it would be ridiculous, even at ſuch a time as we have ſuppoſed, much more at the preſent. Void of all ambition, except the ambition of honeſt fame, he might ſtand the efforts of violence in ſuch a cauſe, not only with little concern, but with much inward complacency. Weary of the world, determined and preparing to retire totally from it, he would ſurely ſuſpend his retreat to face the perſecution; and whatever his perſecutors might imagine, they would erect

a ſort of triumphal arch to the man they hated. He would leave the world with more honor than they would remain in it. By ſuffering in defence of the conſtitution of his country, they who had thought favorably of him, would think that he crowned the good, and they who had entertained prejudices againſt him, that he atoned for the ill, which had been imputed to him. Such different judgments you know, ſir, will attend every man's character who acts on our divided ſtage; and he is happy who can reconcile them ſo nearly. It never happens that there is a man of whom all ſpeak well; as it rarely, very rarely, happens that there is a man of whom all ſpeak ill, except thoſe who are hired to ſpeak well.

I find it hard to leave off, when I have the honor of writing to you, ſir; but having now explained the principal reaſons that induced me to addreſs this dedication to you, it is time that I ſhould force myſelf to a concluſion, and conclude by recommending the following ſheets to your ſerious peruſal. I recommend them to nothing elſe. I do not apprehend that they will want your patronage any more than the perſon who wrote them. Let them ſtand or fall in the public opinion, according to their merit. But if you ſhould find any thing in them that deſerves your notice, you will have an obligation to one, from whom you leaſt expected any; to,

SIR,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

The AUTHOR of the diſſertation upon parties.

A

DISSERTATION

ON

PARTIES.

LETTER I.

SIR,

TO corrupt and to divide are the trite and wicked expedients, by which ſome miniſters in all ages have affected to govern; but eſpecially ſuch as have been leaſt capable of exerting the true arts of government. There is however a difference to be made between theſe two expedients, to the advantage of the latter, and by conſequence between the characters of thoſe who put them in practice.

EVERY buſy, ambitious child of fortune, who hath himſelf a corrupt heart, and becomes maſter of a large purſe, hath all that is neceſſary to employ the expedient of corruption with ſucceſs. A bribe, in the hand of the moſt blundering coxcomb that ever diſgraced honor and wealth and power, will prevail as much as in the hand of a man of ſenſe, and go farther too, if it weigh more. An intriguing chamber-maid may

may ſlip a bank-note into a griping paw, as well as the moſt ſubtle daemon of hell. H**E may govern as triumphantly by this expedient as the great knight his brother, and the great knight as BURLEIGH himſelf.

BUT every character cannot attempt the other expedient of dividing, or keeping up diviſions, with equal ſucceſs. There is, indeed, no occaſion for any extraordinary genius to divide; and true wiſdom deſpiſes the infamous taſk. But there is need of that left-handed wiſdom, called cunning, and of thoſe habits in buſineſs, called experience. He that is corrupted, co-operates with him that corrupts. He runs into his arms at the firſt beckon; or, in order ſometimes to raiſe the price, he meets him but half way. On the other hand, to divide, or to maintain and renew the diviſions of parties in a ſtate, a ſyſtem of ſeduction and fraud is neceſſary to be carried on. The divided are ſo far from being acceſſory to the guilt, that they would not be divided, if they were not firſt deceived.

FROM theſe differences, which I have obſerved between the two expedients, and the characters and means proper to put them in practice with ſucceſs, it may be diſcovered perhaps why, upon former occaſions, as I ſhall hereafter ſhew, the expedient of dividing proſpered ſo much better than that of corrupting; and why, upon ſome later occaſions, the expedient of corrupting ſucceeds ſo well in thoſe hands, which are not, and I truſt, will not be ſo lucky in maintaining or renewing our party diviſions.

MUCH hath been written by you, Mr. D'ANVERS, by your correſpondents and others, who have drawn their pens in the cauſe of truth, virtue, and liberty, againſt the right reverend, as well as undignified, the noble, as well as ignoble aſſertors of cor-

corruption; enough ſurely to ſhame thoſe who have not loſt all ſenſe of ſhame, out of ſo ignominious a crime; and to make thoſe who have not loſt every other ſenſe, tremble at the conſequences of it. We may flatter ourſelves that theſe honeſt endeavórs have had ſome effect; and have reaſon to hope that far greater will follow from thoſe illuſtrious examples of repulſes, which have been lately given to the grand corrupter, notwithſtanding his frequent and inſolent declarations that he could ſeduce whomſoever he had a mind to gain. Theſe hopes are farther confirmed to us by repeated declarations of the ſenſe of parliament, and will be turned, we doubt not, into certainty, whenever the wiſdom of the two houſes ſhall again think it proper to raiſe new barriers of law againſt this encroaching vice.

In the mean time, I think nothing can better anſwer the deſign of your papers, nor promote the public good more effectually in the preſent conjuncture, than to put our countrymen frequently on their guard againſt the artifice, which is clumſily, but induſtriouſly employed to maintain, and, if it be poſſible, to create new diviſions amongſt them. That day, which our fathers wiſhed to ſee, and did not ſee, is now breaking upon us Shall we ſuffer this light to be turned again into party-darkneſs by the incantations of thoſe who would not have paſſed for conjurers, even in the days of ſuperſtition and ignorance? The nation is not only brought into an uniformity of opinion concerning the preſent adminiſtration, by the length and the righteous conduct of it; but we are grown into an unanimity about principles of government, which the moſt ſanguine could ſcarce have expected, without extravagance. Certain aſſociations of ideas were made ſo familiar to us, about half a century ago, and became in the courſe of time ſo habitual, that we ſhould not have been able, even a few years ago, to break them, nor have been eaſily induced to believe, on the faith of any prediction, that experience

rience and the evidence of facts would, in a few years more, break them for us, deſtroy all our notions of party, and ſubſtitute new ones in their room.

The power and majeſty of the people, an original contract, the authority and independency of parliament, liberty, reſiſtance, excluſion, abdication, depoſition; theſe were ideas aſſociated, at that time, to the idea of a whig, and ſuppoſed by every whig to be incommunicable, and inconſiſtent with the idea of a tory.

Divine, hereditary, indefeaſable right, lineal ſucceſſion, paſſive-obedience, prerogative, non-reſiſtance, ſlavery, nay and ſometimes popery too, were aſſociated in many minds to the idea of a tory, and deemed incommunicable and inconſiſtent in the ſame manner, with the idea of a whig.

But now that which neither ſide would have believed on the faith of any prediction, is come to paſs;

------- quod divûm promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en! attulit ultro.

Theſe aſſociations are broken; theſe diſtinct ſets of ideas are ſhuffled out of their order; new combinations force themſelves upon us; and it would actually be as abſurd to impute to the tories the principles, which were laid to their charge formerly, as it would be to aſcribe to the projector and his faction the name of whigs, whilſt they daily forfeit that character by their actions. The bulk of both parties are really united; united on principles of liberty, in oppoſition to an obſcure remnant of one party, who diſown thoſe principles, and a mercenary detachment from the other, who betray them.

How

How this change for the better comes to have been wrought in an age, when moſt things have changed for the worſe; and ſince it hath been wrought, why the old diſtinctions are kept up in ſome meaſure, will I think be accounted for in treating this ſubject farther. At preſent, what ſhall we ſay to thoſe who publicly ſpeak of this national union as impracticable and chimerical; yet privately act againſt it, with all their might, as a practicable thing, and a real evil to them? If it be as compleat and as well cemented, as I imagine it is, and as every honeſt Briton wiſhes it may be; nay, if there be nothing more than a ſtrong tendency on all ſides towards it, which no man of the leaſt obſervation and candor will deny; it is ſurely the duty of every one, who deſires the proſperity of his country, to ſeize the opportunity, to cultivate and improve it. If men are to be known by their works, the works of thoſe, who oppoſe this union, denote them ſufficiently. Wicked and unhappy men! who ſeek their private ſafety, in oppoſing public good. Weak and ſilly men! who vainly imagine that they ſhall paſs for the nation, and the nation for a faction; that they ſhall be judged in the right, and the whole body of the people in the wrong-----On whom would they impoſe?-----How long do they imagine that ſo unequal a conteſt can laſt?

There is no complaint which hath been more conſtantly in the mouths, no grief hath lain more heavily at the hearts of all good men, than thoſe about our national diviſions; about the ſpirit of party, which inſpires animoſity and breeds rancor; which hath ſo often deſtroyed our inward peace; weakened our national ſtrength, and ſullied our glory abroad. It is time therefore that all, who deſire to be eſteemed good men, and to procure the peace, the ſtrength and the glory of their country by the only means, by which they can be procured effectually, ſhould join their efforts to heal our national diviſions, and to

change the narrow ſpirit of party into a diffuſive ſpirit of public benevolence.

That we may be more encouraged to do ſo, it will be of uſe perhaps to conſider, in ſome particulars, what advances are already made towards that national union, without which no national good can be expected in ſuch circumſtances as ours.

Let us begin with the preſent temper of the members of the church of England towards the diſſenters. Thoſe laws, by which the latter were debared from ſerving God after their own way, have not been theſe many years a terror to them. Thoſe which were deſigned to hinder the propagation of their principles, and thoſe which ſhut the door of all public preferment, even to ſuch amongſt them as conformed occaſionally, are repealed. Far from deſiring to impoſe any new hardſhips upon them, even thoſe who have been reputed their enemies, and who have acted as ſuch on ſeveral occaſions, acknowledge their error. Experience hath removed prejudice. They ſee that indulgence hath done what ſeverity never could; and from the frankneſs of theſe, if I was a diſſenter, I ſhould ſooner entertain hopes of future favor, than from the double dealing of thoſe who lean on the diſſenters when they are out of power, and who eſteem them a load upon them when they are in it. We are now in the true and only road, which can poſſibly lead to a perfect reconciliation among proteſtants; to the abolition of all their differences; or to terms of difference ſo little eſſential, as to deſerve none of diſtinction. Theſe happy ends muſt be obtained by mutual good will. They never can be obtained by force. It is true, indeed, that force, which is the effect of a majority and ſuperior power, may ſupport a rivalſhip and erect even counter-eſtabliſhments. But then, by the ſame means, our antient diſputes will be revived; the church will be thought really

really in danger; and religious feuds, which have been ſo long and ſo beneficially kept down, will once more diſturb the peace of the ſtate. It is a certain truth, that our religious and civil conteſts have mutually, and almoſt alternately, raiſed and fomented each other. Churchmen and diſſenters have ſometimes differed, and ſometimes thought, or been made to think, that they differed, at leaſt, as much about civil as religious matters. There can be therefore no way ſo effectual to compoſe their differences on the latter, as to improve the growing union between them on the former. "Idem ſentire de repu-"blicâ," to think alike about political affairs, hath been eſteemed neceſſary to conſtitute and maintain private friendſhips. It is obviouſly more eſſential in public friendſhips. Bodies of men in the ſame ſociety can never unite, unleſs they unite on this principle; and if they once unite on this principle, they will unite on all others, or they will readily and chearfully make one another eaſy about them.-----Let me ſpeak plainly. It becomes a man to do ſo, who means honeſtly.---- In our political diviſions of whig and tory, the diſſenters have adhered to the former, and they want no apology for doing ſo. They joined themſelves to thoſe with whom they agreed, and ſtood in oppoſition to thoſe with whom they differed in principles of government. There could be no objection brought againſt them on this account. They certainly did not follow power. They did not act like a ſect, or a faction, who had, and purſued, an intereſt diſtinct from the intereſt of the whole. Their non-conformity hath nothing to do here. They concurred with conformiſts; and if they had been conformiſts themſelves, as they were diſſenters, they would have acted in the ſame manner. But if this diviſion of parties, on the ſame principles, ſubſiſts no longer; if there be in truth neither a tory, nor a whig, as I have ſaid above, but a court and a country party in being; if the political principles, which the diſſenters

have formerly avowed, are manifeſtly purſued on one ſide; and thoſe which they have oppoſed, or others equivalent to them in their effects, are purſued on the other; can the diſſenters heſitate about the option they are to make? I am perſuaded they cannot. I know that ſeveral amongſt them do not. What might be, and certainly would be ſaid, if they made their option to ſtand by the m * *, I will not ſo much as ſuggeſt. What muſt be the conſequence of their ſtanding by the nation, in oppoſition to him, for between theſe two powers the preſent conteſt lies, it is eaſy to tell, and impoſſible to deny. They will prove, in this caſe, to the whole world, that the ſpirit of liberty animates, and conſcience alone determines their conduct. They, who could never brook a regal, will have the merit of ſaving their country from a miniſterial tyranny; and their country will owe them all the acknowledgments, which are due from good and grateful citizens of the ſame commonwealth.

As to the other great and national diviſion of whig and tory; he, who recollects what hath paſſed in parliament, and obſerves what paſſes out of it, can differ very little in his opinion from what hath been ſaid concerning it. The principal articles of your civil faith, publiſhed ſome time ago, or, to ſpeak more properly, the civil faith of the old whigs, are aſſented and conſented to by the country party; and I ſay, upon good authority, that if this creed was made a teſt of political orthodoxy, there would appear at this time but very few heretics amongſt us. How different the caſe is on the other ſide, will appear not only from the actions, but from the principles of the court-party, as we find them avowed in their writings; principles more dangerous to liberty, though not ſo directly, nor ſo openly levelled againſt it, than even any of thoſe, bad as they were, which ſome of theſe men value themſelves for having formerly oppoſed.

In

In ſhort, the revolution is looked upon by all ſides as a new æra; but the ſettlement then made is looked upon by the whole country-party as a new magna charta, from whence new intereſts, new principles of government, new meaſures of ſubmiſſion, and new obligations ariſe. From thence we muſt date both king and people. His majeſty derives his title from acts, made in conſequence of it. We likewiſe derive, not our privileges, for they were always ours, but a more full and explicit declaration, and a more ſolemn eſtabliſhment of them from the ſame period. On this foundation all the reaſonable, independent whigs and tories unite. They could unite on this alone; for the whigs have always profeſſed the principles which paved the way for the revolution; and whatever the tories may have profeſſed, they acted upon the ſame principles, or they acted upon none, which would be too abſurd to aſſert, when they brought about that great event, in concert with the reſt of the nation, as I ſhall ſome time or other prove.

To this magna charta, and theſe principles, let us adhere inviolably, in oppoſition to the two extremes mentioned by me at the beginning of this letter, viz. to thoſe who diſown them, and to thoſe who betray them.-----Let neither the polemical ſkill of Lesly, nor the antique erudition of Bedford, perſuade us to put on again thoſe old ſhackles of falſe law, falſe reaſon, and falſe goſpel, which were forged before the revolution, and broken to pieces by it.----As little let us ſuffer the arch ſlyneſs of G * *, the dogmatical dryneſs of H * * or the ſoucing proſtitution of S * * to ſlip new ſhackles on us, which are inconſiſtent with the conſtituent principles of our eſtabliſhment. -----Let us maintain and improve the national union, ſo happily begun, and bleſs God for diſpoſing the temper of the nation almoſt univerſally to it.----Such a coalition hath been long wanted in this kingdom, and never more than at this impor-

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tant criſis; for on this it will depend whether they, who not only oppoſe the progreſs of that growing corruption, which had well nigh overſpread the land, but endeavor to extirpate it by the roots, ſhall prevail; or they who nouriſh and propagate it, who eat themſelves, and tempt others to eat the baneful fruit it bears.-----On this it will depend whether they ſhall prevail, who conſtantly inſiſt againſt the continuance of a ſtanding army in time of peace, agreeably to the principles of our conſtitution; or they who plead for it, and endeavor to make it a neceſſary part of that conſtitution, though incompatible with public liberty.-----On this it will depend whether they ſhall prevail, who endeavor to conceal the frauds which are practiſed, and to ſcreen the fraudulent, at the riſque of ruining credit, and deſtroying trade, as well as to monopolize in the hands of a few the whole wealth of the nation; or they who do their utmoſt to bring the former to light, and the latter to puniſhment, at a time when glaring fraud, or very ſtrong ſymptoms of fraud, appear in ſo many parts of public management, from ſome of the greateſt companies down to the turnpike at Hyde-park corner.-----On this it will depend whether they ſhall prevail, who deſire that Great Britain ſhould maintain ſuch a dignity and prudent reſerve in the broils of Europe, as become her ſituation, ſuit her intereſt, and alone can enable her to caſt the balance; or they who are eager, on every occaſion, to proſtitute her dignity, to pawn her purſe, and to ſacrifice her commerce, by intangling her not only too much with the other great powers of Europe, from whom ſhe may ſometimes want reciprocal engagements, but even with thoſe diminutive powers, from whom it would be ridiculous to expect any.

I am, SIR, yours, &c.

LET-

LETTER II.

SIR,

WHILST I was writing my laſt letter to you, it came into my thoughts that nothing would illuſtrate the ſubject better, nor enforce more ſtrongly the exhortation to an union of parties, in ſupport of that conſtitution, on the terms of which alone all right to govern us, and all our obligation to obey is now founded, than an enquiry into the riſe and progreſs of our late parties; or a ſhort hiſtory of toryiſm and whiggiſm from their cradle to their grave; with an introductory account of their genealogy and deſcent.

YOUR papers have been from the firſt conſecrated to the information of the people of Britain; and I think they may boaſt very juſtly a merit ſingular enough, that of never ſpeaking to the paſſions, without appealing to the reaſon of mankind. It is fit they ſhould keep up this character, in the ſtricteſt manner, whilſt they are employed on the moſt important ſubject, and publiſhed at the moſt important criſis. I ſhall therefore execute my deſign with ſincerity and impartiality. I ſhall certainly not flatter, and I do not mean to offend. Reaſonable men and lovers of truth, in whatever party they have been engaged, will not be offended at writings, which claim no regard but on this account, that they are founded in reaſon and truth, and ſpeak with boldneſs what reaſon and truth conſpire to dictate. As for the drummers and trumpeters of faction, who are hired to drown the voice of both in one perpetual din of clamor, and would endeavor to drown, in the ſame manner, even the dying groans of their country, if ſhe was already brought into that extreme condition; they ſhall not provoke me

me to break a moſt contemptuous ſilence. The ſubject is too ſolemn. They may prophane it, by writing on it. Far be it from me to become guilty of the ſame crime, by anſwering them.

If the enquiry I am going to make into the riſe and progreſs of our late parties ſhould produce in any degree the good which I intend, it will help to confirm and improve the national union, ſo happily begun, by taking off ſome remains of ſhyneſs, diſtruſt and prejudice, which may ſtill hang about men, who think alike, and who preſs on from different quarters to the ſame common point of view. It will help to unmaſk more effectually the wicked conduct of thoſe, who labor with all the ſkill, and, which is much more conſiderable, with all the authority they poſſeſs, to keep up the diviſion of parties; that each of theſe may continue to be, in its turn, what all of them have been too often and too long, the inſtruments and the victims of private ambition. It will do ſomething more. A few reflections on the riſe and progreſs of our diſtemper, and the riſe and progreſs of our cure, will help us of courſe to make a true judgment on our preſent ſtate, and will point out to us, better perhaps than any other method, the ſpecific remedies ſtill neceſſary to preſerve our conſtitution in health and vigor.---Having premiſed this, I come to the point.

Queen Elizabeth deſigned, and the nation called king James to the throne, tho the whole Scotiſh line had been excluded by the will of Henry the eighth, made indeed under the authority of an act of parliament, and yet little regarded either by the parliament, or the people. As ſoon as he was on the throne, a flattering act of recognition paſſed; for tho all princes are flattered on their firſt acceſſion, yet thoſe princes are ſure to be flattered moſt, who deſerve panegyric leaſt. In this act the

the parliament acknowledged, on the knees of their hearts, ſuch was the cant of the age, the indubitable right, by which they declared that the crown deſcended to him immediately, on the deceaſe of queen ELIZABETH. Of this act, and of the uſe which ſome men, very weakly I think, endeavored to make of it, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter. I would only obſerve here, that this is the aera of hereditary right, and of all thoſe exalted notions, concerning the power and prerogative of kings, and the ſacredneſs of their perſons. All together they compoſed ſuch a ſyſtem of abſurdity as had never been heard of in this country, till that anointed pedant broached them. They have been ſpoken of pretty much at large in your papers; particularly in ſome of thoſe publiſhed under the name of OLDCASTLE. To them I refer.

To aſſert that the extravagant principles of eccleſiaſtical and civil government, which began to be propagated in this reign, and were carried ſtill higher in the next, gave occaſion to thoſe of another kind, or of another extreme, which were taught with ſucceſs, and gained by degrees great vogue in the nation, would be too much. Opinions very different from thoſe which received the ſanction of a legal eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate, had crept about obſcurely, if not ſilently, even whilſt the government of ELIZABETH laſted. But this I ſay; that the principles by which king JAMES and king CHARLES the firſt governed, and the exceſſes of hierarchical and monarchical power, exerciſed in conſequence of them, gave great advantage to the oppoſite opinions, and entirely occaſioned the miſeries which followed. Phrenzy provoked phrenzy, and two ſpecies of madneſs infected the whole maſs of the people. It hath coſt us a century to loſe our wits, and to recover them again.

If our grievances under king Charles the firſt had been redreſſed by a ſober, regular, parliamentary reformation of the ſtate; or, if the civil war happening, a new government had been eſtabliſhed on principles of the conſtitution, not of faction, of liberty, not of licentiouſneſs, as there was on the abdication of king James the ſecond; we may conclude, both from reaſon and experience, that the abſurd and ſlaviſh doctrines I have mentioned would have been exploded early. They would have been buried in the recent grave of him who firſt deviſed them; and the memory of him and of them would have ſtunk together in the noſtrils of mankind. But the contrary fell out. The ſtate was ſubverted, inſtead of being reformed; and all the fury of faction and enthuſiaſm was employed to deſtroy the conſtitution to the very foundations. A natural conſequence followed. If the principles of king James's and king Charles's reigns had been diſgraced by better, they would not have riſen again: but they were only kept down for a time by worſe; and therefore they roſe again at the reſtoration, and revived with the monarchy. Thus that epidemical taint, with which king James infected the minds of men, continued upon us: and it is ſcarce hyperbolical to ſay, that this prince hath been the original cauſe of a ſeries of misfortunes to this nation, as deplorable as a laſting infection of our air, of our water, or our earth, would have been. The ſpirit of his reign was maintained in that of his ſon, (for how could it well be otherwiſe, when the ſame miniſters were continued in power?) and the events of both produced the civil war. The civil war ended in the death of the king, and the exile of his family. The exile of theſe princes reconciled them to the religion of Rome, and to the politics of foreign nations, in ſuch degrees as their different characters admitted. Charles ſipped a little of the poiſonous draught, but enough however to infect his whole conduct. As for James,

---Ille

----Ille impiger hauſit
Spumantem pateram.

he drank the chalice off to the loweſt and fouleſt dregs.

That principles as abſurd as theſe in their nature, and as terrible in their conſequences, ſuch as would ſhock the common ſenſe of a Samojede, or an Hottentot, and had juſt before deluged the nation in blood, ſhould come into vogue again at the reſtoration, will not appear ſtrange to thoſe who carry themſelves back as it were to that point of time. The wounds of the civil war were bleeding, and the reſentments of the cavaliers, who came into power at court and in parliament, were at their height. No wonder then if few men had, in ſuch a ferment as this, penetration enough to diſcern, or candor enough to acknowledge, or courage enough to maintain, that the principles we ſpeak of were truly and primarily the cauſe of all their misfortunes. The events, which proved them ſo, were recent; but for that very reaſon, becauſe they were recent, it was natural for men in ſuch a circumſtance as this, to make wrong judgments about them. It was natural for the royal party to aſcribe all their and their country's misfortunes, without any due diſtinction, to the principles on which king Charles and even king James had been oppoſed; and to grow more zealous for thoſe on which the governments of theſe two princes had been defended, and for which they had ſuffered. Add to this the national tranſport, on ſo great a revolution; the exceſs of joy which many felt, and many feigned; the adulation employed by many to acquire new merit; and by many to atone for paſt demerit; and you will find reaſon to be ſurpriſed, not that the ſame principles of government, as had threatned our liberties once, and muſt by neceſſary conſequence do ſo again, were eſtabliſhed; but that

our liberties were not immediately, and at once given up. That they were ſaved, we owe not to parliament, no not to the convention parliament, who brought the king home; but to thoſe great and good men, CLARENDON and SOUTHAMPTON. Far from taking advantage of the heat and fervor of the times, to manage parliaments into ſcandalous jobs, and fatal compliances with the crown, to their immortal honour, with gratitude and reverence to their memories be it ſpoken, they broke the army, ſtinted the revenue, and threw their maſter on the affections of his people.---But I return.

BESIDES theſe reaſons, drawn from the paſſions of men, others of a more ſober kind may be given, to account for the making a ſettlement at the reſtoration upon principles too near a-kin to thoſe, which had prevailed before the war, and which had in truth cauſed it. Certain it is, that altho the non-conformiſts were ſtun'd by the blow they had juſt received, and tho their violence was reſtrained by the force of the preſent conjuncture; yet they ſtill exiſted. Symptoms of this appeared, even whilſt the government was ſettling, and continued to appear long after it was ſettled. Now, every ſymptom of this kind renewed the dread of relapſing into thoſe miſeries, from which the nation had ſo lately recovered itſelf; and this dread had the natural effect of all extreme fears. It hurried men into every principle, as well as meaſure, which ſeemed the moſt oppoſite to thoſe of the perſons feared, and the moſt likely, tho at any other riſque, to defeat their deſigns, and to obviate the preſent danger, real or imaginary. May we not fairly conjecture, for it is but conjecture, ſomething more? In ſuch a temper of mind, and ſuch a ſituation of circumſtances, might not even thoſe, who ſaw how groundleſs and dangerous ſuch extravagant notions about the right, power and prerogative of kings were, imagine however that it was a part of prudence

prudence to give way to them, and to countenance them in the preſent conjuncture; to ſuffer the opinions of the nation to be bent too far on one ſide, as they had been bent too far on the other; not that they might remain crooked, but that they might become ſtrait?

THE ſame ſpirit and much the ſame reaſons that determined our ſettlement, at the reſtoration, upon ſuch high principles of monarchy, prevailed relatively to our religious differences, and the ſettlement of the church. I ſhall ſpeak of it with that freedom which a man may take, who is conſcious that he means nothing but the public good, hath no bye-ends, nor is under the influence of ſerving any particular cauſe.

I SAY then very frankly, that the church and the king having been joined in all the late conteſts, both by thoſe who attacked them, and thoſe who defended them, eccleſiaſtical intereſts, reſentments, and animoſities came in to the aid of ſecular, in making the new ſettlement. Great lenity was ſhewn at the reſtoration, in looking backwards; unexampled and unimitated mercy to particular men, which deſerved no doubt much applauſe. This conduct would have gone far towards reſtoring the nation to it's primitive temper and integrity, to it's old good manners, it's old good humor, and it's old good nature, (expreſſions of my lord chancellor CLARENDON, which I could never read without being moved and ſoftened,) if great ſeverity had not been exerciſed immediately after, in looking forwards, and great rigor uſed to large bodies of men, which certainly deſerves cenſure, as neither juſt, nor politic.----I ſay, not juſt; becauſe there is, after all, a real and a wide difference between moral and party juſtice. The one is founded in reaſon; the other takes it's color from the paſſions of men, and is but another name for injuſtice. Moral juſtice carries puniſh-

ment

ment as far as reparation, and neceſſary terror require; no farther. Party juſtice carries it to the full extent of our power, and even to the gorging and ſating of our revenge; from whence it follows that injuſtice and violence once begun, muſt become perpetual in the ſucceſſive revolutions of parties, as long as theſe parties exiſt.----I ſay, not politic; becauſe it contradicted the other meaſures taken for quieting the minds of men. It alarmed all the ſects anew; confirmed the implacability, and whetted the rancor of ſome; diſappointed and damped a ſpirit of reconciliation in others; united them in a common hatred to the church; and rouzed in the church a ſpirit of intolerance and perſecution. This meaſure was the more imprudent, becauſe the opportunity ſeem'd fair to take advantage of the reſentments of the preſbyterians againſt the other ſectaries, and to draw them, without perſecuting the others, by the cords of love into the pale of the church, inſtead of driving them back by ſevere uſage into their antient confederacies. But when reſentments of the ſort we now mention were let looſe, to aggravate thoſe of the other ſort, there was no room to be ſurpriſed at the violences which followed; and they, who had acted greater, could not complain of theſe, great as they were, with any very good grace.

If we may believe * one, who certainly was not partial againſt theſe ſects, both preſbyterians and independents had carried the principles of rigor, in the point of conſcience, much higher, and acted more implacably upon it, than ever the church of England hath done, in its angrieſt fits. The ſecuring themſelves therefore againſt thoſe, who had ruined them and the conſtitution once already, was a plauſible reaſon for the church-party to give, and I doubt not the true and ſole

* Dr. Burnet, afterwards biſhop of Saliſbury, in one of his tracts.

motive

motive of many for exerciſing, and perſiſting in the exerciſe of great ſeverity. General, prudential arguments might, and there is reaſon to believe they did, weigh with particular men; but they could have little force, at ſuch a time, on numbers. As little could ſome other conſiderations have then, whatever they have now. The promiſes at Breda, for inſtance, and the terms of the declaration ſent from thence, could not be urged with force to a parliament, who had no mind, and was ſtrictly under no obligation, to make good ſuch promiſes as the king had made, beyond his power of promiſing, if taken abſolutely; or from which, if taken conditionally, he was diſcharged, on the refuſal of parliament to confirm them.----Thus again, the merit pleaded by the preſbyterians, on account of the ſhare they had in the reſtoration, which was very real and very conſiderable, could avail however but little. That they went along with the national torrent, in reſtoring the conſtitution of church and ſtate, could not be denied. But then it was remembered too that theſe fruits of repentance came late; not till they had been oppreſſed by another ſect, who turned upon them, wreſted the power out of their hands, and made them feel, what they had made others feel, the tyranny of a party.

Such reaſons and motives, as I have mentioned prevailed; and worſe than theſe would have been ſufficient, when the paſſions of men ran ſo high, to lay the diſſenters, without any diſtinction, under extreme hardſhips. They ſeemed to be the principal object of the fears and jealouſies of parliament. Addreſſes were continually made, and the edge of the law continually whetted againſt them, from 1660 to 1669, when the law for ſuppreſſing conventicles, and the laſt of theſe penal ſtatutes paſſed, as I remember. Experience will juſtify me for ſaying that this long and extreme rigor was unwiſe, as well as un-

unjuſt. It appears, indeed, from the memorials of thoſe times, that they who ſuffered had given abundant provocation, tho not ſufficient excuſe, to the rigor under which they ſuffered. Some former hardſhips which the diſſenters had endured from the church, made them more violent againſt it, when they got poſſeſſion of an uſurped power. Juſt ſo the violence which they exerciſed at that time, ſtimulated the ſeverity they felt in their turn, when the legal conſtitution of the church was reſtored. Notwithſtanding all which, I incline, upon very good reaſons, to think that this ſeverity was not in the firſt deſign of the miniſters, nor would have been ſhewn, if another fatal influence had not prevailed. The influence I mean is that of popery. It prevailed from the firſt moments to the laſt of the reign of king CHARLES the ſecond. The beſt miniſters were frequently driven off their byaſs by it. The worſt had a ſure hold on their maſter, by complying with it. On the occaſion now mentioned, this influence and the artifice of the popiſh faction worked very fatally on the paſſions of parties, and the private intereſts of individuals; and the miniſters, and the church, and the diſſenters, were bubbles alike of their common enemy. Barefaced popery could aſk no favor, becauſe popery could expect none. Proteſtant diſſenters were therefore to ſerve as ſtalking horſes, that papiſts might creep behind them, and have hopes of being ſome time or other, admitted with them. The church party was hallooed on the diſſenters; whilſt the diſſenters were encouraged to unite and hold out; whilſt they were flattered with an high opinion of their own ſtrength, and the king's favor; and whilſt ſome leading men amongſt them, who thought it better to be at the head of a ſect than at the tail of an eſtabliſhment, were perhaps encouraged and confirmed in that thought, by the private applications of the court.

THESE

THESE arts, theſe wicked arts (for ſuch they were) prevailed; and tho the two thouſand miniſters, who went out of their churches on one day, were far from being all of the ſame mind, or having one poſitive conſiſtent ſcheme; tho many of them muſt have loſt their benefices, even if they had complied with the act of uniformity, becauſe they were intruders, and in actual poſſeſſion of benefices legally belonging to others; yet, by uniting in the point of non-conformity, they appeared as one body, and in ſome ſenſe they were ſo. Several of them were popular for certain modes of devotion, ſuited to the humor of the time; and ſeveral were men eminent for true learning and unaffected piety. They increaſed the zeal of their flocks, and created compaſſion in others. Here the court began to reap the fruits of their management, in the ſtruggle for a toleration. I uſe the word, tho I know it may be ſimply cavilled at. The firſt ſtep made was an application to the king, who declared himſelf ready and willing to diſpenſe, in their favor, with ſeveral things in the act of uniformity: and thus the diſſenters were made, by the ſeverity of the parliament and the intrigues of the court, the inſtruments of introducing a diſpenſing power. Such attempts were made more than once; but happily failed as often as made, through the vigorous oppoſition of parliament; till at laſt the ſcene began to open more, and the diſſenters to ſee that they were made the tools of promoting what they never intended, the advancement of the prerogative above law, and the toleration of popery againſt it.

TO conclude. By ſuch means as I have deſcribed, the conſtitution of parties after the reſtoration preſerved unhappily too near a reſemblance to the conſtitution of parties before the war. The prerogative was not, indeed, carried ſo high in ſome inſtances, as JAMES and CHARLES the firſt had attempted to carry it. Nay, ſome ſupports of it were bought off, and

taken away; and others more dangerous, as we have obſerved, were prevented by the virtue of the men at that time in power. But ſtill the government was eſtabliſhed on principles, ſufficient to invite a king to exerciſe arbitrary power, and ſupport him by their conſequences in the exerciſe of it afterwards; ſo that, in this reſpect, the ſeeds of future diviſions were ſowed abundantly. The diſſenters had, indeed, loſt much of their credit and all their power. But ſtill they had numbers, and property, and induſtry, and compaſſion, for them; ſo that here was another crop of diſſentions planted to nurſe up, and to ſtrengthen the other. They did not inflame the conteſt which followed, into a civil war, as they had helped to do formerly; but I think that without them, and the diſunion and hatred among proteſtants, conſequent upon them, the zeal againſt popery could not have run into a kind of factious fury, as we ſhall be obliged to confeſs it did. I think that fears of falling once more under preſbyterian, or republican power, could not have been wrought up in the manner they were, towards the end of this reign, ſo as to drown even the fear of popery itſelf; ſo as to form a party, in favor of a popiſh ſucceſſor; ſo as to tranſport both clergy and laity into an avowal of principles, which muſt have reduced us to be at this time ſlaves, not freemen, papiſts, not proteſtants; if the very men, who had avowed ſuch principles, had not ſaved themſelves and us, in direct oppoſition to them.----But I am running into the ſubject of another letter, when this is grown too prolix already.

I am, SIR, yours, &c.

LET-

LETTER III.

SIR,

THE ſum of what hath been ſaid, concerning the ſettlement of church and ſtate, and the diviſion of parties at the reſtoration, amounts to this; that as the attempts of king JAMES and king CHARLES the firſt, againſt the ſpirit of the conſtitution, threw the nation into a civil war, and all the miſerable conſequences, both neceſſary and contingent, of that calamity; ſo the fury, enthuſiaſm and madneſs of thoſe factions which aroſe during that unnatural ferment, frightened the nation back, if not into all, yet more generally perhaps than before, into moſt of the notions that were eſtabliſhed to juſtify the exceſſes of former reigns. Hereditary, indefeaſable right, paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance, thoſe corner-ſtones, which are an improper foundation for any ſuperſtructure, but that of tyranny, were made, even by parliament, the foundation of the monarchy; and all thoſe, who declined an exact and ſtrict conformity to the whole eſtabliſhment of the church, even to the moſt minute parts of it, were deprived of the protection, nay, expoſed to the proſecution of the ſtate. Thus one part of the nation ſtood proſcribed by the other; the leaſt, indeed, by the greateſt; whereas a little before the greateſt ſtood proſcribed by the leaſt. Roundhead and cavalier were, in effect, no more. Whig and tory were not yet in being. The only two apparent parties were thoſe of churchmen and diſſenters; and religious differences alone at this time maintained the diſtinction.

SUCH was the ſtate of party, upon the meeting of the firſt parliament called by king CHARLES the ſecond, and for ſome

years afterwards, as nearly as I have been able to obſerve by what I have read in hiſtory, and received from tradition.---- How the notions then in vogue began to change, and this ſpirit to decline, ſome time after the reſtoration; how the zeal of churchmen and diſſenters againſt one another began to ſoften, and a court and country party to form themſelves; how faction mingled itſelf again in the conteſt, and renewed the former reſentments and jealouſies; how whig and tory aroſe, the furious offspring of thoſe inauſpicious parents round-head and cavalier; how the proceedings of one party might have thrown us back into a civil war, confuſion and anarchy; how the ſucceſs of the other had like to have entailed tyranny on the ſtate, and popery in church; how the revolution did, and could alone, deliver us from the grievances we felt, and from the dangers we feared; how this great event was brought about by a formal departure of each ſide from the principles objected to them by the other; how this renewal of our conſtitution, on the principles of liberty, by the moſt ſolemn, deliberate, national act, that ever was made, did not only bind at leaſt every one of thoſe, who concurred in any degree to bring it about; (and that deſcription includes almoſt the whole nation) but how abſurd it is for any man, who was born ſince that aera, or who, being born before it, hath been bound by no particular, legal tye to any other ſettlement, to be willing to give up the advantages of the preſent conſtitution, any more than he would give up the privileges of the great charter, which was made and ratified ſo many ages ago; all theſe points are to be now touched in that ſummary manner which I have preſcribed to myſelf, and which will be ſufficient, in ſo plain a caſe, where men are to be reminded of what they know already, rather than to be informed, and to be confirmed, not to be convinced.

I PROCEED therefore to obſerve, that the nation began to be indiſpoſed to the court, ſoon after the reſtoration. The ſale of Dunkirk helped to ruin a great and good miniſter, tho it be ſtill doubtful at leaſt, notwithſtanding the clamor raiſed, and the negotiations with D'ESTRADES ſo much inſiſted upon, whether he was ſtrictly anſwerable for this meaſure.------Who knows how ſoon the re-eſtabliſhment of the ſame port and harbour may be laid in form to the charge of thoſe two men, who are ſtrictly and undeniably anſwerable for it, and who ſtagger already under the weight of ſo many other juſt imputations?

THE firſt Dutch war, which was lightly and raſhly undertaken, and which ended ignominiouſly for the nation, augmented the public indiſpoſition. Nay misfortunes, ſuch as the plague, and the burning of London, as well as miſmanagement, had this effect. But we muſt place at the head of all, a jealouſy of popery, which was well founded, and therefore gathered ſtrength daily. This ſoon heated the minds of men to ſuch a degree, that it ſeems almoſt wonderful the plague was not imputed to the papiſts, as peremptorily as the fire.

THE death of my lord SOUTHAMPTON, and the diſgrace and baniſhment of my lord CLARENDON, made room for new cauſes of jealouſy and diſſatisfaction; and the effects increaſed in proportion. Theſe two noble lords had ſtood in the breach againſt popery and foreign politics; and what one of them ſaid of the other, that is, SOUTHAMPTON of CLARENDON, may be applied with juſtice to both. They were true proteſtants, and honeſt Engliſhmen. Whilſt they were in place, our laws, our religion, and our liberties were in ſafety. When they were removed, England felt the ill effects of the change; for when they were removed, all theſe were in danger. How glorious a panegyric is this, in which the unanimous voice of poſterity

poſterity does and muſt agree? It is preferable ſurely to all the titles and honors and eſtates, which thoſe illuſtrious patriots left behind them: and ſo I perſuade myſelf it is eſteemed by the young noblemen, who are heirs to their virtues as well as their fortunes.

KING CHARLES, and more than him, the duke and the popiſh faction, were now at liberty to form new ſchemes; or rather to purſue old ones, with leſs reſerve, againſt the religion and liberty of England. As ſoon as the famous cabal had the whole adminiſtration of affairs, theſe deſigns were puſhed almoſt without any reſerve at all.------I am not writing the hiſtory of this reign; nor have I undertaken any thing more than to make a few obſervations on the ſeveral turns of parties in it. I need not therefore deſcend into particular proofs of the deſigns which I attribute to the court; nor into a deduction of the meaſures taken to promote them, and the efforts made to defeat them. That theſe deſigns were real, can be doubted of by no man; ſince without quoting many printed accounts, which are in the hands of every one, or inſiſting on other proofs, which have not ſeen the light, and ſuch there are, the abbot PRIMI's relation of the ſecret negotiations between the king and his ſiſter, the ducheſs of ORLEANS, publiſhed in 1682, as I think, and immediately ſuppreſſed, as well as the hiſtory of the jeſuit D'ORLEANS, written on memorials furniſhed to him by king JAMES the ſecond, put the whole matter out of diſpute, and even beyond the reach of cavil. It is ſufficient for my purpoſe to obſerve, that the tide of party, which had run ſo ſtrongly for the court, and had been ſeldom ſo much as ſlackened hitherto, began now to turn, and to run year after year more ſtrongly the other way.

When this parliament ſate down, for it deſerves our particular obſervation that both houſes were full of zeal for the preſent government, and of reſentment againſt the late uſurpations, there was but one party in parliament; and no other party could raiſe its head in the nation. This might have been the caſe much longer, probably as long as king Charles had ſate on the throne, if the court had been a little honeſter, or a little wiſer. No parliament ever did more to gain their prince than this. They ſeemed for ſeveral years, to have nothing ſo much at heart as ſecuring his government, advancing his prerogative, and filling his coffers. The grants they made him were ſuch as paſſed for inſtances of proſuſion in thoſe days; when one million two hundred thouſand pounds a year for the civil liſt, the fleet, the guards and garriſons, and all the ordinary expences of the government, was thought an exorbitant ſum; how little a figure ſoever it would make in our times, when two thirds of that ſum, at leaſt, are appropriated to the uſe of the civil liſt ſingly. But all this was to no purpoſe: a foreign intereſt prevailed; a cabal governed; and ſometimes the cabal, and ſometimes a prime-miniſter had more credit with the king than the whole body of his people. When the parliament ſaw that they could not gain him over to his own, and to their common intereſt; nor prevail on him by connivance, compliance, and other gentle methods; they turned themſelves to ſuch as were rough, but agreeable to law and the cuſtom of parliament, as well as proportionable to the greatneſs of the exigency. That they loſt their temper, on ſome particular occaſions, muſt not be denied. They were men, and therefore frail: but their frailties of this kind proceeded from their love of their country. They were tranſported, when they found that their religion and liberty were conſtantly in danger from the intrigues of a popiſh faction; and they would have been ſo tranſported, no doubt, if liberty alone

alone had been attacked by a proteſtant faction. Then it was, that this high-church parliament grew favorable to proteſtant diſſenters, and ready to make that juſt diſtinction, ſo long delayed between them and popiſh recuſants, that the whole proteſtant intereſt might unite in the common cauſe. Then it was, that this prerogative-parliament defied prerogative, in defence of their own privileges, and of the liberties of their country. Then it was, that this paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance parliament went the utmoſt lengths of reſiſtance, in a parliamentary way; and the neceſſary conſequence of the ſteps they made in this way, muſt have been reſiſtance in another, if the king had not dropt his miniſters, retracted his pretenſions, redreſſed ſome and given expectation of redreſſing other grievances. In fine, this penſioner-parliament, as it hath been ſtiled, with ſome corruption in the houſe, and an army ſometimes at the door of it, diſbanded the army in England, and proteſted againſt the militia ſettled in Scotland by act of parliament, and appointed to march for any ſervice, wherein the king's honor, authority, and greatneſs were concerned, in obedience to the orders of the privy-council. That I may not multiply particular inſtances, they not only did their utmoſt to ſecure their country againſt immediate danger, but projected to ſecure it againſt remote danger, by an excluſion of the duke of York from the crown, after they had endeavored ſtrenuouſly, but in vain, to prevent his entailing popery more eaſily upon us, by his marriage with a popiſh princeſs; for he had declared himſelf a papiſt with as much affectation, as if he expected to grow popular by it; had already begun to approve his zeal, and exerciſe his talent in converſions, by that of his firſt wife; and was notoriouſly the agent of Rome and France, in order to ſeduce his brother into ſtronger meaſures than king Charles was willing to take. King Charles,

to

to uſe an expreſſion of the lord HALLIFAX of that age, would trot; but his brother would gallop.

WHEN I reflect on the particulars here mentioned, and a great many others, which might be mentioned to the honor of this parliament, I cannot hear it called the penſioner-parliament, as it were by way of eminence, without a degree of honeſt indignation; eſpecially in the age in which we live, and by ſome of thoſe who affect the moſt to beſtow upon it this ignominious appellation. Penſions indeed, to the amount of ſeven or eight thouſand pounds, as I remember, were diſcovered to have been given to ſome members of the houſe of commons. But then let it be remembered likewiſe, that this expedient of corrupting parliaments began under the adminiſtration of that boiſterous, over-bearing, dangerous miniſter, CLIFFORD. As long as there remained any pretence to ſay that the court was in the intereſt of the people, the expedient of bribery was neither wanted, nor practiſed. When the court was evidently in another intereſt, the neceſſity and the practice of bribing the repreſentatives of the people commenced. Should a parliament of Britain act in compliance with a court, againſt the ſenſe and intereſt of the nation, mankind would be ready to pronounce very juſtly that ſuch a parliament was under the corrupt influence of the court. But, in the caſe now before us, we have a very comfortable example of a court wicked enough to ſtand in need of corruption, and to employ it; and of a parliament virtuous enough to reſiſt the force of this expedient; which PHILIP of Macedon boaſted that he employed to invade the liberties of other countries; and which had been ſo often employed by men of leſs genius, as well as rank, to invade the liberties of their own. All that corruption could do in this parliament, was to maintain the appearance of a court-party, whilſt the meaſures of the court united a country

party, in oppoſition to them. Neither places nor penſions could hinder courtiers in this parliament from voting, on many ſignal occaſions, againſt the court; nor protect either thoſe who drew the king into ill meaſures, nor thoſe who complied with him in them. Nay, this penſioner-parliament, if it muſt be ſtill called ſo, gave one proof of independency, beſides that of contriving a teſt in 1675, to purge their members on oath from all ſuſpicion of corrupt influence, which ought to wipe off this ſtain from the moſt corrupt. They drove one of their paymaſters out of court, and impeached the other, in the fullneſs of his power; even at a time, when the king was ſo weak as to make, or ſo unhappy as to be forced to make, on account of penſions privately negotiated from France, the cauſe of the crown and the cauſe of the miniſter one, and to blend their intereſts together.

What I have ſaid to the honor of the long parliament is juſt; becauſe in fact the proceedings of that parliament were agreeable to the repreſentation I have given of them. But now, if ſome ſevere cenſor ſhould appear, and inſiſt that the dame was chaſte, only becauſe ſhe was not enough tempted; that more penſions would have made more penſioners; that much money and little prerogative is more dangerous to liberty than much prerogative and little money; and that the worſt and weakeſt miniſter king Charles ever had, might have been abſolute in this very parliament whoſe character I defend, if ſuch a miniſter had been able to inliſt, with places, penſions and occaſional bribes, not a ſlender majority, which the defection of a few might at any time defeat, but ſuch a bulky majority, as might impoſe on itſelf: if any one, I ſay, ſhould refine in this manner, and continue to inſiſt that ſuch a miniſter, with ſuch a purſe, would have ſtood his ground in the parliament I ſpeak of, with how much contempt and indignation ſoever

ever he might have been every where treated by the people; I ſhall not preſume to aſſert the contrary. It might have been ſo. Our ſafety was owing as much, perhaps, to the poverty of the court, as to the virtue of the parliament. We might have loſt our liberties. But then I would obſerve before I conclude, that if this be true, the preſervation of our religion and liberty, at that time, was owing to theſe two circumſtances; firſt, that king CHARLES was not parſimonious, but ſquandered on his pleaſures, what he might have employed to corrupt this parliament; ſecondly, that the miniſters in that reign, fingering no money but the revenue, ordinary and extraordinary, had no opportunity to filch in the pockets of every private man, and to bribe the bubbles very often with their own money; as might be done now, when funding hath been ſo long in faſhion, and the greateſt miniſter hath the means of being the greateſt ſtockjobber, did not the eminent integrity of the miniſter, and the approved virtue of the age, ſecure us from any ſuch danger.

WE have now brought the deduction of parties very near to the aera of whig and tory; into which the court found means to divide the nation, and by this diviſion to acquire in the nation a ſuperiority, which had been attempted ineffectually, even by corruption in parliament.------But this I reſerve for another letter, and am,

SIR, yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

THERE is a paſſage in TULLY ſo extremely applicable to the miſchievous, but tranſitory, prevalence of thoſe principles of government, which king JAMES the firſt imported into this country, that ſince it occurs to my memory, I cannot begin this letter better than by quoting it to you, and making a ſhort commentary on it. "* Opinionum commenta "delet dies, naturae judicia confirmat." Groundleſs opinions are deſtroyed, but rational judgments, or the judgments of nature, are confirmed by time. It is BALBUS, who makes this obſervation very properly, when he is about to prove the exiſtence of a ſupreme being. The ſame obſervation might have been employed as properly, on other occaſions, againſt BALBUS himſelf; and the truth of it might have been exemplified, by comparing the paradoxes and ſuperſtitious opinions of his own ſect, as well as the tales of an hippocentaur, or a chimaera, with the eternal truths of genuine theiſm, and ſound philoſophy. In ſhort, the application of it might have been juſtly made then, and may be ſo now in numberleſs inſtances, taken from the moſt important ſubjects, on which the thoughts of men are exerciſed, or in which their intereſt, as men and members of ſociety, are concerned.

THE authority of a ſect, and much more of a ſtate, is able to inſpire, and habit to confirm, the moſt abſurd opinions. Paſſion, or intereſt, can create zeal. But nothing can give ſtability and durable uniformity to error. Indolence, or ignorance, may keep it floating, as it were, on the ſurface of the

* L. 2. de nat. deor.

mind,

mind, and ſometimes hinder truth from penetrating; or force may maintain it in profeſſion, when the mind aſſents to it no longer. But ſuch opinions, like human bodies, tend to their diſſolution from their birth. They will be ſoon rejected in theory, where men can think, and in practice, where men can act with freedom. They maintain themſelves no longer, than the ſame means of ſeduction, which firſt introduced them, or the ſame circumſtances, which firſt impoſed them, attend and continue to ſupport them. Men are draged into them, and held down in them, by chains of circumſtances. Break but theſe chains, and the mind returns with a kind of intellectual elaſticity to it's proper object, truth. This natural motion is ſo ſtrong, that examples might be cited of men embracing truth in practice, before they were convinced of it in theory. There are caſes, where reaſon, freed from conſtraint, or rouſed by neceſſity, acts in ſome ſort the part of inſtinct. We are impelled by one, before we have time to form an opinion. We are often determined by the other, againſt our opinion; that is, before we can be ſaid properly to have changed it. But obſerve here the perverſeneſs of that rational creature, man. When this happens; when the judgment of nature, for ſo we may ſpeak after TULLY, hath prevailed againſt the habitual prejudice of opinion; inſtead of acknowledging the victorious truth, which determined him to act, inſtead of condemning the erroneous opinion, againſt which he acted, he is too often apt to endeavor, peeviſhly and pedantically, to reconcile his actions to his error; nay, to perſiſt in renouncing true, and aſſerting falſe maxims, whilſt he reaps the benefit, and maintains the conſequences of the former.

You ſee whither we are brought by theſe general reflections. The abſurd opinions, ("fictae & vanae" our Roman orator would have called them) about the right, power, and prerogative

gative of kings, were ſo little able to take a deep root, and to ſtand the blaſts of oppoſition, that few of thoſe who drew their ſwords on the ſide of king CHARLES the firſt, were determined to it by them. I aſſert this fact on cotemporary authority; on the authority even of ſome who were themſelves engaged in that cauſe, from the beginning to the end of our civil wars. A more recent tradition aſſures us, that when the ſame opinions revived at the reſtoration, they did not ſink deep even then into the minds of men; but floated ſo ſuperficially there, that the parliament, (the very parliament, who had authorized them, and impoſed them, as I obſerved in the laſt letter) proceeded a great way, and was ready to have proceeded farther, in direct oppoſition to them. A tradition ſtill more recent will inform us, and that is to be the ſubject of this letter; that when theſe opinions revived again, at the latter end of the ſame reign, with an appearance of greater ſtrength, and of a more national concurrence than ever, they revived but to be exploded more effectually than ever. King CHARLES made uſe of them to check the ferment raiſed againſt his government; but did not ſeem to expect that they would ſubſiſt long in force. His wiſer brother depended much on them; but his dependence was vain. They were, at that time, wearing out apace; and they wore out the faſter by the extravagant uſe which was made of them. They were in the mouths of many, but in the hearts of few; for almoſt all thoſe who had them in their mouths, acted againſt them. Thus were theſe wicked and ridiculous principles of government twice revived, and twice deſtroyed again, in leſs than thirty years from the reſtoration.

Ter ſi reſurgat murus aheneus,
---------Ter pereat!

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The ſecond revival of theſe principles, for enough hath been ſaid of the firſt, happened ſoon after the diſſolution of the long parliament; and there, I think, we muſt place the birth of whig and tory, tho theſe parties did not grow up into full maturity, nor receive their names till about two years afterwards. The diſſolution of this parliament was deſired by men of very different complexions; by ſome, with factious views; by others, on this honeſt and true maxim, that a ſtanding parliament, or the ſame parliament long continued, changes the very nature of the conſtitution, in the fundamental article on which the preſervation of our whole liberty depends. But whatever motives others might have to deſire this diſſolution, the motives which prevailed on the king, were probably theſe. This parliament not only grew more reſerved in their grants of money, and ſtiff and inflexible in other matters, but ſeemed to have loſt that perſonal regard which they had hitherto preſerved for him. They brought their attacks home to his family; nay, to himſelf, in the heats which the diſcovery and proſecution of the popiſh plot occaſioned. That on the queen provoked him. That on his brother embarraſſed him. But that which provoked and embarraſſed him both, was the proſecution of the earl of Danby, in the manner in which it was carried on. I will not deſcend into the particulars of an affair, at this time ſo well underſtood. This miniſter was turned out, and might have been puniſhed in another manner, and much more ſeverely than I preſume any one, who knows the anecdotes of that age, thinks that he deſerved to be. But the intention of this attack, according to Rapin, was to ſhew that the king, as well as his brother, was at the head of a conſpiracy to deſtroy the government, and the proteſtant religion. This is a very bold aſſertion, and ſuch a one as I do not pretend to warrant. But thus much is certain; that if the earl of Danby's impeachment had been tried, he muſt have juſtified himſelf,

himſelf, by ſhewing what every one knew to be true, that the ſecret negotiations with France, and particularly that for money, were the king's negotiations, not his.

Now, whether the king hoped, by diſſolving the parliament, to ſtop this proſecution; or to ſoften that of the popiſh plot; or to defeat the project of excluding the duke of York; his hopes were all diſappointed. The following parliaments trod in the ſteps of this. How, indeed, could they do otherwiſe in thoſe days, when the temper of the people determined the character of the parliament; when an influence on elections by prerogative, was long ſince over, and private, indirect means of gaining another more illegal influence were not yet found, or the neceſſary ſupports of ſuch means were not yet acquired; when any man, who had deſired people, who knew neither his fortune, his character, nor even his perſon, to chuſe him their repreſentative in parliament, that is, to appoint him their truſtee, would have been looked upon and treated as a madman; in ſhort, when a parliament, acting againſt the declared ſenſe of the nation, would have appeared as ſurpriſing a phaenomenon in the moral world, as a retrograde motion of the ſun, or any other ſignal deviation of things from their ordinary courſe in the natural world.

There was indeed one point, which this parliament had taken extremely to heart, and which was no longer open to the parliaments that followed; I mean the conduct of the king in foreign affairs, during the war between France, and Holland and her allies, which ended by the treaty of Nimighen. This war was not made in remote countries. It was made at our door. The motives to it, on the part of the aggreſſor, were neither injuries received, nor rights invaded; but a ſpirit of conqueſt, and barefaced uſurpation. The intereſt we had

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in it was not ſuch as depended on a long chain of contingencies, and required much ſubtlety to find out, but plain and immediate. The ſecurity, and at one time, the very exiſtence of the Dutch commonwealth depended on the event of it. No wonder then, if the conduct of the king, who joined openly with France at firſt, and ſerved her privately to better purpoſe at laſt, furniſhed ample matter to the public diſcontent, and helped to increaſe the ill humors of ſucceeding parliaments on two other points, which were ſtill open, and continued to draw their whole attention, as long as king CHARLES ſuffered any to ſit, during the reſt of his reign.

THESE two points were the proſecution of perſons involved in the popiſh plot, and the excluſion of the duke of YORK. The firſt of theſe had prepared mankind for the ſecond. The truth is, that if nothing which affected the duke had been produced, beſides COLEMAN's letters, theſe proofs of his endeavors to ſubvert the religion and liberty of the people he pretended to govern, joined to ſo many others of public notoriety, which ſhewed the whole bent of his ſoul, and the whole ſcheme of his policy, would have afforded reaſon more than ſufficient for ſacrificing the intereſt, or even the right (if you will call it ſo) of one man to the preſervation of three kingdoms. I know how partial we are in the judgments we make, concerning ourſelves, and our own intereſts. I know that this partiality is the immediate effect of ſelf-love, the ſtrongeſt ſpring in the human, nay in the whole animal ſyſtem; and yet I cannot help being ſurpriſed that a man ſhould expect to be truſted with a crown, becauſe he is born a prince, in a country where he could not be truſted by law, and ought not to be truſted in reaſon, with a conſtable's ſtaff, if he was born a private perſon. Let me add, that ſuch an expectation muſt be deemed more unreaſonable in a deſcendant of HENRY the fourth of

France, if poſſible, than in any other man. The hereditary title of the houſe of BOURBON, on the extinction of that of VALOIS, was certainly as clear, and much better eſtabliſhed by the laws and uſages of France, than the hereditary right of any prince of the houſe of STUART to the crown of England; and yet HENRY the fourth, with all the perſonal qualifications which could recommend a prince to the eſteem and love of his ſubjects, would never have been received into the throne by the French nation, if he had not been of the religion of that nation. On what foundation then could it be expected that a proteſtant and a free people ſhould be leſs animated by religion and liberty both, than their neighbours had been by religion alone; for liberty had nothing to do in that conteſt? Our fathers were thus animated, at the time I am ſpeaking of. The long parliament projected the excluſion; and if the deſign had been carried on, in the ſpirit of a country party, it would probably have been carried on with a national concurrence, and would conſequently have ſucceeded in effect, tho not perhaps at once, nor in the very form at firſt propoſed.

THE violent and ſanguinary proſecution of the popiſh plot was intended, no doubt, to make the ſucceſs of the excluſion more ſecure, by raiſing the paſſions of men ſo high, that no expedient but an abſolute and immediate excluſion, in the terms of the bill, ſhould be thought ſufficient. I cannot help ſaying on this occaſion, that I wiſh this laudable and juſt deſign had not been purſued, by wading through the blood of ſo many men: enemies to our religion and liberty, indeed; but convicted, for the moſt part on evidence, which could hardly have paſſed at any other time. I wiſh we had done nothing which might be interpreted to the diſrepute of our own religion, whilſt we attempted to proſcribe theirs. In fine, I wiſh, for the honor of my country, that the proſecutions on account

count of this plot, and much more on account of another, which was ſet up as a kind of retaliation for this, and which cauſed ſome of the nobleſt, as well as ſome of the meaneſt blood in the nation to be ſpilt, could be erazed out of the records of hiſtory. But there is ſtill a farther reaſon to wiſh that greater temper had been joined, at this time, to the ſame zeal for religion and liberty. Men were made to believe that the king, who had yielded on ſo many other occaſions, would yield on this; that he, who had given up ſo many miniſters, would give up his brother at laſt; and that if the parliament would accept nothing leſs than the excluſion in their own way, it would be extorted from him. Now in this they were fatally deceived: and I muſt continue to ſuſpect, till I meet with better reaſons than I have yet found to the contrary, that they were ſo deceived by the intrigues of two very oppoſite cabals; by the duke of YORK's, who were averſe to all excluſions, whether abſolute, or limited, but moſt to the laſt; and by the duke of MONMOUTH's, who could not find their account in any but an abſolute excluſion; nor in this neither, unleſs the bill paſſed without any mention of the duke's daughters, as next in ſucceſſion: to which, as biſhop BURNET tells us, the prince of ORANGE was willing to comply, on the faith of aſſurances he had received from hence; a fact, which the biſhop might know, and we may therefore take on his word, as extraordinary as it ſeems. I would only obſerve that king WILLIAM, then prince of ORANGE, could have no reaſon for conſenting that his wife's pretenſions to the crown ſhould not be confirmed by an act which excluded her father, except one; and that was the neceſſity, real, or apparent, of uniting different private intereſts in the public meaſure of excluding the duke of YORK. Now, if this was his reaſon, the ſame reaſon proves, what ſhall be farther confirmed in the next letter, that a ſpirit of faction ran through the proceedings of thoſe who promoted

the bill of excluſion: and when faction was oppoſed to faction, there is no room to wonder, if that of the court prevailed. The king, who had not uſed to ſhew firmneſs on other occaſions, was firm on this: and the conſequence of puſhing the excluſion in this manner, was giving him an opportunity of breaking the country party; of dividing the nation into whig and tory: of governing himſelf without parliaments; and of leaving the throne open to his brother, not only without our limitations or conditions, but with a more abſolute power eſtabliſhed, than any prince of his family had enjoyed.

As ſoon as the court had got, by management, a plauſible pretence of objecting a ſpirit of faction to thoſe in the oppoſition, the ſtrength of the oppoſition was broken, becauſe the national union was diſſolved. A country party muſt be authorized by the voice of the country. It muſt be formed on principles of common intereſt. It cannot be united and maintained on the particular prejudices, any more than it can, or ought to be, directed to the particular intereſts of any ſet of men whatſoever. A party, thus conſtituted, is improperly called party. It is the nation, ſpeaking and acting in the diſcourſe and conduct of particular men. It will prevail in all ſtruggles ſooner or later, as long as our conſtitution ſubſiſts; and nothing is more eaſy to demonſtrate than this, that whenever ſuch a party finds it difficult to prevail, our conſtitution is in danger; and when they find it impoſſible, our conſtitution muſt in fact be altered. On the other hand, whenever the prejudices and intereſts of particular ſets of men prevail, the eſſence of a country party is annihilated, and the very appearance of it will ſoon be loſt. Every man will reſort in this caſe to that ſtandard, under which he hath been marſhaled in former diviſions; to which his inclinations lead him;

him; or which, tho he does not intirely approve, yet diſapproves the leaſt.

Such a diſſolution of a country party was brought about at the period to which we are now come in our deduction of parties, by the paſſions, the public pique, and private intereſt of particular men, and by the wily intrigues of the court. The diſſolution of this party, and the new diviſion of the nation into whig and tory, brought us into extreme danger. This extreme danger reunited the nation again, and a coalition of parties ſaved the whole. Such an experience might have ſhewed them, that how oppoſite ſoever their profeſſions were, yet they really differed more on negative than on poſitive principles; that they ſaw one another in a falſe light, for the moſt part, and fought with phantoms, conjured up to maintain their diviſion, rather than with real beings. Experience had not this happy effect ſoon. The ſwell of the ſea continued long after the ſtorm was over; and we have ſeen theſe parties kick and cuff like drunken men, when they were both of the ſame ſide.------Let us hope that this ſcene of tragical folly is over, to the diſappointment of thoſe who are conſcious of paſt iniquity, or who meditate future miſchief. There are no others who wiſh and endeavor to prolong it.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER V.

SIR,

NOTHING is more uſeful, nothing more neceſſary, in the conduct of public affairs, than a juſt diſcernment of ſpirits. I mean here not only that natural private ſagacity which is converſant about individuals, and enables ſome men to pry, as it were, into the heads and hearts of others, and to diſcover with them thoſe latent principles which conſtitute their true characters, and are often diſguiſed in outward action; but I mean principally that acquired, public, political ſagacity, which is of the ſame kind, tho I think not altogether the ſame thing as the former; which flows from nature too, but requires more to be aſſiſted by experience, and formed by art. This is that ſuperior talent of miniſters of ſtate, which is ſo rarely found in thoſe of other countries, and which abounds ſo happily at preſent in thoſe of Great Britain. It is by this, that they diſcover the moſt ſecret diſpoſitions of other courts; and, diſcovering thoſe diſpoſitions, prevent their deſigns, or never ſuffer themſelves to be ſurpriſed by them. It is by this, that they watch over the public tranquillity at home; foreſee what effect every event that happens, and much more every ſtep they make themſelves, will have on the ſentiments and paſſions of mankind. This part of human wiſdom is therefore every where of uſe; but is of indiſpenſable neceſſity in free countries, where a greater regard is to be conſtantly had to the various fluctuations of parties; to the temper, humor, opinion and prejudices of the people. Without ſuch a regard as this, thoſe combinations of peculiar circumſtances, which we commonly call conjunctures, can never be improved to the beſt advantage, by acting in conformity, and in proportion

to

to them; and without improving ſuch conjunctures to the beſt advantage, it is impoſſible to atchieve any great undertaking, or even to conduct affairs ſucceſsfully in their ordinary courſe.

A WANT of this juſt diſcernment of ſpirits, if I am not extremely miſtaken, defeated the deſigns of thoſe who proſecuted with ſo much vigor the popiſh plot, and the excluſion of the duke of YORK. Several of them were men of very great abilities; and yet we ſhall have no reaſon to be ſurpriſed that they failed in this point, if we reflect how unfit even the greateſt genius is to diſcern the ſpirit of others, when he hath once overheated his own. All men are fallible: but here lies the difference. Some men, ſuch as I have juſt mentioned, croſſed by difficulties, preſſed by exigencies, tranſported by their own paſſions, or by the paſſions of thoſe who fight under their banner, may now and then deviate into error, and into error of long and fatal conſequence. But there are ſome men, ſuch as I ſhall not mention upon this occaſion, (becauſe I reſerve them for another and a better) who never deviate into the road of good ſenſe; who, croſſed by no difficulties, preſſed by no exigencies, meeting ſcarce oppoſition enough to excite their induſtry, and guiding a tame well tutored flock, that follow their bell-weather obſtinately, but never tread on his heels: there are men, I ſay, whoſe ſpecial privilege it is to proceed with all theſe advantages, deliberately and ſuperciliouſly, from blunder to blunder, from year to year, in one perpetual maze of confuſed, incoherent, inconſiſtent, unmeaning ſchemes of buſineſs.

BUT having nothing to do with the men of this character at preſent, I return to thoſe of the former claſs; to the men who led the whig party, at it's firſt appearance, in the time of king CHARLES the ſecond. The foundation upon which they built all

all their hopes of ſucceſs, was this; that they ſhould frighten and force the king into a compliance with them: but they did not enough conſider that the methods they took were equally proper to frighten and force a great part of the nation from them, by reaſon of the particular circumſtances of that time. They did not enough conſider, that when they began to put their deſigns in execution, ſcarce twenty years had paſſed from the reſtoration; and that the higheſt principles, in favor of the church and the monarchy, had prevailed almoſt univerſally during one half of that time, and very generally during the other half; that they had the accidental paſſions of the people for them, but the ſettled habits of thinking againſt them; that they were going off from a broad to a narrow bottom; from the nation to a part of the nation; and this at a time, when they wanted a more than ordinary concurrence of the whole body. They did not enough conſider that they were changing the very nature of their party, and giving an opportunity to the court, which was then become, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, a faction, to grow up into a party again, and ſuch a party as would divide, at leaſt, the people with them, upon principles, plauſible in thoſe days, and ſufficient to raiſe a ſpirit capable to diſappoint all their endeavors.

The ſame reſentments and prejudices, the ſame jealouſies and fears, which burſt out with violence, upon many occaſions a few years before, lay ſtill in the hearts of men; latent and quiet, indeed, and wearing out by degrees, but yet eaſy to be revived, and to be blown up anew. If we compare the conduct of the long parliament in 1674 and 1675, with the attempts which had been lately made, during the adminiſtration of the cabal; with the ſecret of the ſecond Dutch war, and many other deſigns and practices of the court, which were then come lately and very authentically to light; with the

ſtate of Scotland, which was then ſubdued under a real tyranny, and with that of Ireland, where, to ſay no more, the act of ſettlement was but ill obſerved; if we make this compariſon, it will not yet appear that the proceedings of the houſe of commons were immoderate, tho they were warm; nor factious, tho they were vigorous; nor that any danger could be then reaſonably apprehended from them, except to the enemies of the conſtitution in church and ſtate; and yet even then the old reſentments, prejudices, jealouſies and fears began to revive; and an apprehenſion of falling back under the influence of preſbyterians and republican principles began to ſhew itſelf in the houſe of lords, and in the nation. It is true, that this had no immediate conſequence; becauſe the popiſh plot broke out ſoon afterwards like a mighty flame, in which theſe little fires, that began to burn anew, were loſt. This great event made the church and the diſſenters continue to run into one, as they had begun to do before; and the ſole diviſion of parties was that of the court and the country, as long as this parliament laſted. But ſtill it was evident with how delicate an hand every thing that related to our former diſputes, required to be touched. It was evident that the leaſt alarm given to the church, or to thoſe who value themſelves on the principles of loyalty then in faſhion, would be ſufficient to open thoſe wounds which were juſt ſkinned over, and to raiſe two new parties out of the aſhes of the old.

These parties were not raiſed, whilſt the long parliament ſate; becauſe a general opinion prevailed, and well enough founded on their precedent conduct, that however angry the king might be with the parliament, or the parliament with the king, a few popular ſteps made on one ſide, and a little money granted on the other, would ſoften matters between them, and diſpoſe them to forget all former quarrels. As hot

therefore as the parliament grew, and as much as ſome people might think that they exceeded their bounds; yet ſtill it was difficult to perſuade even theſe people that a parliament, like this, would puſh things to the laſt extremity; deſtroy the conſtitution they had ſettled and ſupported with ſo much zeal; or draw the ſword againſt a prince, to whom they had borne ſo much affection. But in the parliaments which followed, the caſe was not the ſame; and I will ſtate as ſhortly as I can, upon authorities, which no man likely to contradict me muſt refuſe, what made the difference. Theſe authorities ſhall be that of BURNET, and that of RAPIN; whom I quote, on this occaſion, for the ſame reaſon that I would quote my lord CLARENDON againſt king CHARLES the firſt, or LUDLOW for him.

IN the year 1676, before we have grounds ſufficient to affirm that the deſign of [a] excluding the duke of YORK was formed, but not before we have reaſon to ſuſpect that it might be in the thoughts of ſeveral, thoſe who ſtood foremoſt in the oppoſition to the court, were very induſtrious to procure a diſſolution of the long parliament; ſo induſtrious, that they [b] negotiated the affair with the duke, who had concurred in a vote for an addreſs to diſſolve it; and they undertook [c] that a new parliament ſhould be more inclineable to grant the papiſts a toleration, than they would ever find this would prove. The papiſts were in earneſt for this meaſure; ſince COLEMAN drew a declaration for juſtifying it, and ſince their deſign in it was to divide the [d] king and his people. It is fair to conclude that the proteſtants, who had been in it at the time I mention, upon party views, were at leaſt as much ſo, when their views roſe higher. This parliament had puſhed a ſtrict and thorough examination into the popiſh plot, with great

[a] BURNET's hiſtory of his own times, vol. i. p. 393.
[b] Ibid. [c] Ibid. [d] Ibid.

ſince-

ſincerity and zeal. Nay, the project of the excluſion had been ſtarted, tho not proſecuted, in the laſt ſeſſion. May we not take it for granted however, that they, who were now reſolved to carry the excluſion, in a manner in which they ſoon attempted to carry it, and who foreſaw by conſequence the difficulties that would be oppoſed to them, and the ſtrong meaſures they ſhould be obliged to purſue, in order to overcome theſe difficulties; I ſay, might not they think this parliament much leſs proper than any other to engage and perſiſt in ſuch meaſures? They thought thus, without doubt; and ſo far they judged better than the king, who came into the diſſolution; upon very different motives. But as to the conſequence of engaging a new parliament in ſuch ſtrong meaſures, the event ſhewed that the king judged better than they, in the progreſs of this affair.

The diſſenters, who had been long perſecuted by the parliament, and bantered and abuſed by the court, were encouraged by the conjuncture to lift up their heads. They took advantage of the horror and indignation, which the diſcovery of the popiſh plot, and the uſe made of this diſcovery had raiſed all over the kingdom. They could not be more zealous in this cauſe than the members of the eſtabliſhed church had ſhewn themſelves to be; but they cried, perhaps, louder for it. In ſhort, whatever their management was, or however they were abetted, certain it is that they were very active, and very ſucceſsful too, in the elections of the parliament which followed the long parliament, according to Rapin, who aſſerts that many of the members, choſen into this houſe of commons, were preſbyterians. He might have ſaid as much, upon juſt as good grounds, of the two parliaments which followed this; and I ſhall ſpeak of them indiſcriminately. The leaders, who muſtered all their forces, in order to puſh the bill

of excluſion, looked on this turn in the elections as an advantage to them: and it might not have been a diſadvantage, if they and the diſſenters had improved it with more moderation. But they were far from doing ſo, as RAPIN himſelf ſeems to own a little unwillingly, when he ſays, that complaiſance for the preſbyterians was carried, perhaps, too far in the bill for the comprehenſion of proteſtant diſſenters. Biſhop BURNET ſpeaks more plainly. He owns that many began to declare openly in favor of the non-conformiſts; that upon this the non-conformiſts behaved themſelves very indecently; that they fell ſeverely on the body of the clergy; and that they made the biſhops and clergy apprehend that a rebellion, and with it the pulling the church to pieces, was deſigned. Several other paſſages of the ſame ſtrength, and to the ſame purpoſe, might be collected from this hiſtorian; and he, who reads them, will not be ſurpriſed, I think, to find that ſuch proceedings as theſe, both in parliament and out of it, gave an alarm to the clergy, and ſet them to make parallels between the late and the preſent times; and to infuſe the fears and the paſſions, which agitated them, into the nation. The biſhop accuſes them, indeed, of doing this with much indecency. But they, who are frightened out of their wits, will be apt to be indecent; and indecency begets indecency.

AT the ſame time that the jealouſies of a deſign to deſtroy the church prevailed, others prevailed likewiſe of a deſign to alter the government of the ſtate; of a deſign not only againſt the ſucceſſor, but againſt the poſſeſſor of the crown. Many well-meaning men, ſays biſhop BURNET upon one occaſion, began to diſlike theſe practices, and to apprehend that a change of government was deſigned.---The king came to think himſelf, ſays the ſame author upon another occaſion, levelled at chiefly, tho for decency's ſake his brother was only named.

named. RAPIN goes farther; for, ſpeaking of the ſame time, he uſes this remarkable expreſſion; that "Things ſeemed to be "taking the ſame courſe as in the year 1640; and there was "reaſon to think that the oppoſing party had no better inten-"tions towards the king now than the enemies of king CHARLES "the firſt had towards him." But whatever ſome particular men, who knew themſelves irreconcileable with the king, as well as the duke, or ſome others, who had ſtill about them a tang of religious enthuſiaſm and republican whimſies, might intend; I am far from thinking that the party, who promoted the excluſion, meant to deſtroy, on the contrary it is plain that they meant to preſerve, by that very meaſure, the conſtitution in church and ſtate. The reaſon why I quote theſe paſſages, and refer to others of the ſame kind, is not to ſhew what was really deſigned, but what was apprehended; for as the diſtinction of whig and tory ſubſiſted long after the real differences were extinguiſhed, ſo were theſe parties at firſt divided, not ſo much by overt-acts committed, as by the apprehenſions, which each of them entertained of the intentions of the other. When the reſolution was once taken of rejecting all limitations, on the belief artfully, and, I think, knaviſhly propagated, that the king would yield, if the parliament perſiſted; the neceſſary conſequences of the king's adhering inflexibly to his brother were thoſe which followed, thoſe "fulmina parliamentaria," harſh votes, angry proceedings, addreſſes, that were in truth remonſtrances, projects of aſſociations, pretenſions to a power of diſpenſing with the execution of laws, (that very prerogative they had ſo juſtly refuſed to the crown) and many others, which I omit. All theſe would have been blaſts of wind, "bruta fulmina," no more, if the king had yielded: and that they were puſhed in this confidence by the bulk of the party who puſhed them, cannot be doubted; ſince it cannot be doubted that the bulk of the party

party depended on the king's yielding almoſt, perhaps, even to the laſt. Some few might be willing, nay deſirous, that he ſhould not yield, and hope to bring things into a ſtate of confuſion; which none but madmen, or thoſe, whom their crimes, or their fortunes render deſperate, can ever wiſh to ſee. But it would be hard, indeed, if parties were to be characterized, not by their common view, or the general tenor of their conduct, but by the private views imputed to ſome amongſt them, or by the particular ſallies, into which miſtake, ſurprize, or paſſion, hath ſometimes betrayed the beſt-intentioned, and even the beſt-conducted bodies of men. Whig and tory were now formed into parties; but I think they were not now, nor at any other time, what they believed one another, nor what they have been repreſented by their enemies, nay by their friends. The whigs were not roundheads, though the meaſures they purſued, being ſtronger than the temper of the nation would then bear, gave occaſion to the ſuſpicions I have mentioned. The tories were not cavaliers, tho they took the alarm ſo ſudden and ſo warm for the church and the king; and tho they carried the principles in favor of the king, at leaſt, whilſt the heat of their conteſts with the oppoſite party laſted, higher than they had been ever carried before. The whigs were not diſſenters, nor republicans, tho they favored the former, and tho ſome inconſiderable remains of the latter, might find ſhelter in their party. The tories had no diſpoſition to become ſlaves, or papiſts, tho they abetted the exerciſe of an exorbitant power by the crown, and tho they ſupported the pretenſions of a popiſh ſucceſſor to it.----Thus I think about the parties, which aroſe in the reign of king CHARLES the ſecond; and as I deliver my thoughts with frankneſs, I hope they will be received with candor. Some farther and ſtronger reaſons for receiving them ſo, may perhaps appear in a ſubſequent letter.

I am, SIR, yours, &c.

LET-

LETTER VI.

SIR,

IF king CHARLES the ſecond could have been prevailed upon to ſacrifice the chimerical divine right of his brother to the real intereſt, and right too, of his people; that happy event would have made him ample amends in future eaſe and quiet, and the nation in future ſecurity, for all precedent diſorders, dangers, and fears of danger. But inſtead of this, he was every day confirmed in the reſolution of not giving up, directly and in terms, that right to his brother, which he thought reflected ſtrength on his own. The very meaſures taken to force him to ſubmit, enabled him to reſiſt. The oppoſite ſpirit ſpent itſelf in blood and violence. The ſpirit of him roſe viſibly in the nation; and he ſaw very ſoon the time approach, when he might venture to appeal to his people againſt his parliament. This time was come, when men were once convinced that a country party prevailed no longer, but that faction had taken it's place. Many appearances, which I have not room to enumerate, ſerved to propagate this opinion; particularly the behavior and almoſt avowed pretenſions of the duke of MONMOUTH; which were carried on even in defiance of the ſolemn declaration made by the king, that he had never married the duke's mother.

SOME of the worthieſt and warmeſt men, who were engaged for the excluſion, complained themſelves, even from the firſt, of the private intereſts and factious intrigues which prevailed amongſt them. "I muſt confeſs," ſays a very conſiderable man,*

* ALGERNON SIDNEY.

who laid down his life for this cauſe afterwards, and whoſe original letter is ſtill extant; "I muſt confeſs, I do not know "three men of a mind; and that a ſpirit of giddineſs reigns "amongſt us, far beyond any I have ever obſerved in my life." And yet he had lived and acted in as factious a time as this nation ever ſaw. He proceeds: "Some look who is fitteſt to ſuc- "ceed.---They are for the moſt part divided between the prince "of ORANGE, and the duke of MONMOUTH. The firſt hath "plainly the moſt plauſible title.---I need not tell you the rea- "ſons againſt MONMOUTH. The ſtrongeſt for him are, that "whoever is oppoſed to YORK will have a good party; and all "Scotland, which is every day like to be in arms, doth certain- "ly favor him, and may probably be of as much importance "in the troubles that are now likely to fall upon us, as they "were in the beginning of the laſt. Others are only upon "negatives," &c.

I COULD eaſily multiply proofs of this kind; but I think I need not take any pains to ſhew that there was ſuch a faction formed at this time; nor to refute WELWOOD, who aſſerts that the duke of MONMOUTH was not ambitious to the degree of aſpiring to the crown, till after his landing in the weſt. I will only remark, that the efforts of this faction amongſt thoſe who drove on the bill of excluſion, furniſhed another motive to the diviſion and animoſity of parties. The tories, who had divided from the others, on jealouſies of deſigns to change the conſtitution in church and ſtate, began now to apprehend that the oppoſite party might ſucceed in another view, and ſet up a king of their own nomination. A notion then entertained by many, that the worſe title a man had, the better king he was likely to make, did not perſuade them. They had ſuffered under the tyranny of a party; many of them had been themſelves the abettors of a party-adminiſtration; and they feared with

with reaſon a party king. Thus perſonal intereſts were mingled on both ſides with public conſiderations; and the duke of YORK gained a great number of adherents, not by affection to him, but by an averſion to MONMOUTH; which increaſed among the tories, in proportion as the duke's popularity increaſed among the whigs; not by any favorable diſpoſition in the tories to popery and arbitrary power; but by a dread, as I have obſerved already, of returning in the leaſt degree under the influence of thoſe principles, and the power of thoſe men, whoſe yoke had galled the necks of many that were ſtill alive and active on the ſtage of public affairs. "Men grew jealous "of the deſign" (ſays biſhop BURNET, ſpeaking of MONMOUTH's popularity) "and fancied here was a new civil war to be raiſed. "Upon this, they joined with the duke's party;" meaning the duke of YORK's.

I SAY nothing of the apprehenſions entertained on one ſide, and the expectations entertained on the other from Scotland; becauſe tho there was, even in the beginning of theſe ſtruggles, a concert between thoſe who were oppreſſed by the court there, and thoſe who oppoſed it here, which grew afterwards into a cloſer correſpondence, and became riper for action; yet the ſeditious ſpirit, that gave occaſion to theſe apprehenſions and expectations, was rouzed and exaſperated by the inhumanity of the duke of LAUDERDALE; who, tho a preſbyterian himſelf, was the butcher of that party; puſhed the warmeſt of them into unjuſtifiable exceſſes; revived their ſilly zeal for the covenant; and wrought up their enthuſiaſm even to aſſaſſination and rebellion. Let me only obſerve, that this was plainly the fault of the court, and could not therefore be imputed to the whigs, whatever uſe ſome of that party might propoſe to make of ſuch a diſpoſition. The violence of the conventiclers was founded high, in order to palliate the ſeverities exerciſed

in the government of that kingdom. But the reaſonable men of all parties thought then, as they think now, and always will think, that it is the duty of thoſe who govern, to diſcern the ſpirit of the people; to conſider even their paſſions; to have a regard to their weakneſſes; and to ſhew indulgence to their prejudices; and that miniſters, who puniſh what they might prevent, are more culpable than thoſe who offend.

As the two parties were formed, ſo was their diviſion maintained by mutual jealouſies and fears; which are often ſufficient to nouriſh themſelves, when they have once taken root in the mind; and which were, at this time, watered and cultivated with all the factious induſtry poſſible. The moſt improbable reports, the moſt idle ſurmizes, carried about in whiſpers, were ſufficient, as I might eaſily ſhew in various inſtances, to raiſe a panic terror in one party, or the other. In both, there were but too many perſons on the watch, to improve and to propagate theſe terrors, and by a frequent repetition of ſuch impreſſions to raiſe the alarm and hatred of parties to the higheſt pitch. He, who went about to allay this extravagant ferment, was called a trimmer; and he, who was in truth a common friend, was ſure of being treated like a common enemy. Some, who voted for the bill of excluſion, were very far from being heartily for it; but I have ſeen good reaſons to believe, and ſuch there are even in our public relations, that ſome of thoſe who voted againſt it, and declared for limitations, concurred in the end, tho they differed in the means, with thoſe who promoted the bill. And yet ſuch men were conſtantly marked out as favorers of popery and enemies to their country. Thus in the other party, men, who had no other view but that of ſecuring their religion and liberty, and who meant nothing more than to force the court into ſuch compliances as they judged neceſſary to eſtabliſh this ſecurity,

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were ſtigmatized with the opprobrious names of fanatic and republican. Thus it happened in thoſe days; and thus it happens in ours; when any man who declares againſt a certain perſon, againſt whom the voice of the nation hath already declared, or complains of things which are ſo notorious, that no man in the nation can deny them, is ſure to be followed by the cry of jacobitiſm, or republicaniſm. But there is a great difference, God be praiſed, between the two caſes. The preſent cry being void of pretence, is therefore without effect. It is heard in few places, and believed only in one.-----But to return.

When the nation was divided in this manner, the heat of the parties increaſed as their conteſt laſted, according to the uſual courſe of things. New engagements were daily taken; new provocations and offences were daily given. Public diſputes begot private pique; and private pique ſupported public diſputes with greater rancor and obſtinacy. The oppoſite principles advanced by the two parties, were carried higher and higher, as they grew more inflamed; and the meaſures they purſued, in order to get the better each of his adverſary, without overmuch regard to any other conſequence, became ſtronger and ſtronger, and perhaps equally dangerous. The meeting of the parliament at Oxford had a kind of hoſtile appearance; and as ſoon as parliaments were laid aſide, which happened on the ſudden and indecent diſſolution of this, the appearance grew worſe. No ſecurity having been obtained by parliamentary methods, againſt the dangers of a popiſh ſucceſſion, it is probable that they, who looked on theſe dangers as neareſt and greateſt, began to caſt about how they might ſecure themſelves and their country againſt them, by methods of another kind; ſuch as extreme neceſſity, and nothing but extreme neceſſity can authorize. Such methods were happily purſued and at-

tended with glorious ſucceſs, a few years afterwards, when this ſucceſſion had taken place; and, by taking place, had juſtified all that had been ſaid againſt it, or foreboded of it; when the nation was ripe for reſiſtance, and the prince of ORANGE ready and able, from a multitude of fortunate, concurring circumſtances, to ſupport ſo great an enterprize. But the attempts, which were wiſe at one time, would have been deſperate at the other; and the meaſures which produced a revolution in the reign of king JAMES, would have produced in the reign of king CHARLES, a civil war of uncertain event at beſt: I ſay of uncertain event at beſt; becauſe it ſeems to me, that whoever revolves in his thoughts the ſtate of England and Scotland, as well as the ſituation of our neighbours on the continent, at that time, muſt be of opinion, that if the quarrel about the excluſion had broke out into a war, the beſt cauſe would have been the worſt ſupported. The king, more united than ever with his brother, would have prevailed. What was projected in 1670, and perhaps more than was then intended, would have been effected; and the religion and liberty of Great Britain would have been deſtroyed by conſequence. We cannot ſay, and it would be preſumption to pretend to gueſs, how far the heads of party had gone, in Scotland, or in England, into meaſures for employing force. Perhaps, little more had paſſed, in which they who became the principal ſacrifices, were any way concerned, than raſh diſcourſe about dangerous, but rude, indigeſted ſchemes, ſtarted by men of wild imaginations, or deſperate fortunes, and rather hearkened to than aſſented to; nay, poſſibly deſpiſed and neglected by them. But the court, who wanted a plot to confirm and increaſe their party, and to turn the popular tide in their favor, took the firſt opportunity of having one; which was ſoon furniſhed to them by the imprudent, but honeſt zeal of ſome, and by the villainy, as well as madneſs of others: and they proſecuted it ſo ſeverely, with

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the help of * forward ſheriffs, willing juries, bold witneſſes and mercenary judges, that it anſwered all their ends. The deſign of aſſaſſinating the king and the duke, was certainly confined to a few deſperate villains; but † too many had heard it from them, who were both ſo fooliſh and ſo wicked, as not to diſcover them; and this reflected great prejudice, tho I doubt not in many caſes very unjuſtly, againſt all thoſe who had acted upon better principles, but yet were involved in theſe proſecutions.

As this event diſarmed, diſpirited and broke one party; ſo it ſtrengthened, animated and united the other. The tories, who looked on the dangers they apprehended from the whigs to be greater and nearer than thoſe which they had apprehended, as well as the whigs, before this new diviſion of parties, from a popiſh ſucceſſion, were now confirmed in their prejudices. Under this perſuaſion, they run headlong into all the meaſures which were taken for enlarging the king's authority, and ſecuring the crown to the duke of York. The principles of divine hereditary right, of paſſive-obedience, and non-reſiſtance, were revived and propagated with greater zeal than ever. Not only the wild whimſies of enthuſiaſts, of ſchoolmen and philoſophers, but the plaineſt dictates of reaſon were ſolemnly condemned in favor of them, by learned and reverend bodies of men; who little thought that in five years time, that is in 1688, they ſhould act conformably to ſome of the very propoſitions, which at this time they declared falſe, ſeditious and impious.

In ſhort, the Guelphs and Gibellines were not more animated againſt each other at any time, than the tories and whigs

* Burnet. † Id.

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at this; and in ſuch a national temper, conſiderable ſteps were made, as they well might be, towards the deſtruction of our conſtitution. One of thoſe which RAPIN enumerates, and inſiſts upon very gravely, can ſcarce be mentioned without ſmiling. "The king, ſays he, in order to make his people feel the "ſlavery he had newly impoſed on them, affected to review his "troops; and theſe troops amounted, by the return of the gar-"riſon of Tangier, to four thouſand men, effective, and well-"armed." The whigs, indeed, in thoſe days, were ſo averſe to ſtanding armies, that they thought even thoſe troops, commonly called guards, unlawful; and biſhop BURNET argues, in his reflections on my lord RUSSEL's tryal, that a deſign to ſeize on them amounted to no more than a deſign to ſeize on a part of the king's army. But it is poſſible that the tories, who had ſhewed their diſlike of ſtanding armies ſufficiently in the long parliament, might think it however no unreaſonable thing, when deſigns of inſurrections, and even of aſſaſſinations had come ſo lately to light, that a number of regular troops, ſufficient to defend the perſon of the king, but not ſufficient to oppreſs the liberties of the people, and five times leſs than we have ſince ſeen kept up in the midſt of the moſt ſecure tranquility, ſhould be winked at, till theſe diſtempers were intirely over.

ANOTHER ſtep, which the ſame author mentions, was indeed of the greateſt conſequence, and laid the ax to the root of all our liberties at once, by giving the crown ſuch an influence over the elections of members to ſerve in parliament, as could not fail to deſtroy that independency, by which alone the freedom of our government hath been, and can be ſupported. I mean the proceedings by quo warranto, and the other methods taken to force, or perſuade, the corporations to ſurrender their old charters, and accept new ones, under ſuch

limitations and conditions, as the king thought fit to innovate. Theſe proceedings were violent, the judgments upon them arbitrary, and the other methods employed ſcandalous. But ſtill it was the end, it was the conſequence, that alarmed and terrified all thoſe who had not ſold themſelves to the court, or who had not loſt, in their zeal for party, all regard to their country, much more than the means that were employed upon this occaſion. If, inſtead of garbling corporations by prerogative, the court could have purchaſed their elections by money, we may reaſonably believe that the ſurer and more ſilent way would have been taken. But would the alarm have been leſs among all the friends of liberty? Certainly not. They would have ſeen that the end was the ſame, and have diſliked theſe means the more, for being leſs liable to obſervation and clamor. A prince, aſſerting an illegal and dangerous prerogative, and applauded for doing ſo, and ſeconded in the attempt by a numerous party in the nation, carried no doubt a very terrible aſpect. But ſtill there was room to hope, the violent character of the duke of York conſidered, (and that hope was actually entertained by many) that the party, who abetted theſe uſurpations of the prerogative, might be ſoon frightened back again from a court to a country intereſt; in which caſe, there was room to hope likewiſe, the milder character and better underſtanding of the king conſidered, that the evil might be in ſome degree redreſſed, and the conſequences of it prevented. It was reaſonable for the friends of liberty to expect that men, who were injured, would complain and ſeek relief, on the firſt favorable opportunity. But if they had been corrupted, and the practice of ſelling elections had been once eſtabliſhed, I imagine that the friends of liberty would have thought the caſe more deſperate.------It is certainly an eaſier taſk, and there is ſomewhat leſs provoking, as well as leſs dangerous in it, to ſtruggle even with a great prince who ſtands on prerogative, than

than with a weak, but profligate miniſter, if he hath the means of corruption in his power, and if the luxury and proſtitution of the age have enabled him to bring it into faſhion. Nothing ſurely could provoke men, who had the ſpirit of liberty in their ſouls, more than to figure to themſelves one of theſe ſaucy creatures of fortune, whom ſhe raiſes in the extravagance of her caprice, diſpatching his emiſſaries, eccleſiaſtical and ſecular, like ſo many evil daemons, to the north and to the ſouth, to buy the votes of the people with the money of the people, and to chuſe a repreſentative body, not of the people, but of the enemy of the people, of himſelf.

This was not the caſe at the time we are ſpeaking of. It was prerogative, not money, which had like to have deſtroyed our liberties then. Government was not then carried on by undertakers, to whom ſo much power was farmed out for returns of ſo much money, and ſo much money intruſted for returns of ſo much power. But tho the caſe was not ſo deſperate, yet was it bad enough in all conſcience; and among all the exceſſes into which the tories ran, in favor of the crown, and in hopes of fixing dominion in their own party, their zeal to ſupport the methods of garbling corporations was, in my opinion, that which threatened public liberty the moſt. It hath been reproached to them by many; but if among thoſe who reproached them, there ſhould be ſome who have ſhared ſince that time in the more dangerous practice of corrupting corporations, ſuch men muſt have fronts of braſs, and deſerve all the indignation which is due to iniquity, aggravated by impudence. The others abetted, in favor of a prerogative, ſuppoſed real by many in thoſe days, and under the pretence at leaſt of law, a power, which gave the crown too much influence in the elections of members of the houſe of commons; but theſe men, if there are any ſuch, have been concerned in

a practice, for the ſake of their own vile intereſt, which ſpreads like a gangrene over the whole body of a nation, and to every branch of government; and which hath never failed, in any one inſtance, where it hath been ſuffered, to become the bane of liberty.

We have now carried the two parties through that period of time, when the conduct of both was moſt liable to the objections made to them by their adverſaries.----The tories acted on the moſt abject principles of ſubmiſſion to the king; and, on thoſe of hereditary right, were zealous for the ſucceſſion of a prince, whoſe bigotry rendered him unfit to rule a proteſtant and a free people.----The whigs maintained the power of parliament to limit the ſucceſſion to the crown, and avowed the principle of reſiſtance; in which they had law, example and reaſon for them. But then the fury of faction was for doing that without parliament, which could only be legally done by it: and, in order to this, the principles of reſiſtance were extended too far; and the hotteſt men of the party taking the lead, they acted in an extravagant ſpirit of licence, rather than a ſober ſpirit of liberty; and the madneſs of a few, little inferior to that of Cromwell's enthuſiaſts, diſhonored the whole cauſe for a time.----My intention was not to have left them here; but to have carried theſe obſervations on ſo far as to juſtify, notwithſtanding theſe appearances, what is ſaid at the concluſion of my laſt letter, concerning the true characters of both parties. But either the abundance of matter hath deceived me, or I have wanted ſkill and time to abridge it; ſo that I muſt defer this part of my taſk, and crave your indulgence, as well as that of your readers, for my prolixity.

I am, SIR, &c.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

I Advanced, in the firſt of theſe eſſays, ſomething to this effect; that every clumſy, buſy, bungling child of fortune, on whom ſhe beſtows the means and the opportunity of corrupting, may govern by this infamous expedient; and, having gratified his ambition and avarice, may have a chance to ſecure himſelf from puniſhment, by deſtroying the liberties of his country. It was advanced likewiſe, in the ſame paper, that every character is not equally fit to govern a people, by dividing them; becauſe ſome cunning, ſome experience, nay, ſome ſkill to form, and ſome addreſs to conduct a ſyſtem of fraud, are neceſſary in this caſe. I perſuade myſelf that no man, who read that paper, was at a loſs to find an inſtance to confirm the truth of the firſt of theſe propoſitions; and we have now before us another, which may ſerve to confirm the truth of the ſecond.

THO I do not think the deſigns of king CHARLES the ſecond either deeply laid, or deeply fixed in his own mind; yet in general they were founded on bad principles, and directed to bad ends. He deſired indeed to be eaſy, and to make his people ſo; but then he deſired both theſe on ſuch conditions, as were inconſiſtent with good government, during the whole courſe of his reign, and with the ſecurity of religion and liberty, during the latter part of it. We have ſeen how the intemperate conduct of many, and the flagitious deſigns of ſome among the whigs, weakened their own party, and gave new ſtrength and new provocations to the other. But we have not yet conſidered ſome other advantages, with-

out which theſe diviſions could neither have been fomented, nor ſupported as they were. Now theſe advantages aroſe chiefly from the character and conduct of the king himſelf. If king CHARLES had found the nation plunged in corruption; the people chuſing their repreſentatives for money, without any other regard; and theſe repreſentatives of the people, as well as the nobility, reduced by luxury to beg the unhallowed alms of a court; or to receive, like miſerable hirelings, the wages of iniquity from a miniſter: if he had found the nation, I ſay, in this condition, (which extravagant ſuppoſition one cannot make without horror) he might have diſhonored her abroad, and impoveriſhed and oppreſſed her at home, tho he had been the weakeſt prince on earth, and his miniſters the moſt odious and contemptible men that ever preſumed to be ambitious. Our fathers might have fallen into circumſtances, which compoſe the very quinteſſence of political miſery. They might have ſold their birth-right for porridge, which was their own. They might have been bubbled by the fooliſh, bullied by the fearful, and inſulted by thoſe whom they deſpiſed. They would have deſerved to be ſlaves, and they might have been treated as ſuch. When a free people crouch, like camels, to be loaded, the next at hand, no matter who, mounts them, and they ſoon feel the whip, and the ſpur of their tyrant; for a tyrant, whether prince or miniſter, reſembles the devil in many reſpects, particularly in this. He is often both the tempter and tormentor. He makes the criminal, and he puniſhes the crime.

BUT this was not the ſtate of the Engliſh nation, at the time we ſpeak of. We were not yet corrupted, nor even quite ripe for corruption. Parties there were; and the conteſts of theſe parties gave occaſion to the riſe and growth of factions; ſome of which ran into the moſt ſeditious practices againſt the

government, and others into the vileſt ſubmiſſion to it. But ſtill a ſpirit of liberty remained in many, uncorrupted and unextinguiſhed, and ſuch as worked our national deliverance in the days of diſtreſs, that ſoon followed. We were freemen then, in the proper ſenſe and full extent of the words; becauſe not only the laws, which aſſerted our common rights, were maintained and improved, but private independency, which can alone ſupport public liberty under ſuch a government as ours, was itſelf ſupported by ſome of that antient occonomy and ſimplicity of manners, that were growing, but not grown, out of faſhion. Such a people, as we then were, could neither be bought, nor driven; and I think king CHARLES could not have divided and led them, if he had wanted any of the qualities he poſſeſſed, or had held another conduct than he held. Far from being proud, haughty, or brutal, "*he had not a grain of pride, or vanity, in his whole "compoſition;" but was the moſt affable, beſt-bred man alive. He treated his ſubjects like noblemen, like gentlemen, like freemen, not like vaſſals, or boors. Whatever notion he had of his hereditary right, he owned his obligation for the crown he wore to his people, as much as he would have been bound to do, in reaſon, in juſtice, in honor, and in prudence, if he had ſtood at the greateſt diſtance from it, in the courſe of lineal ſucceſſion, and had been called to it from the low ſtate in which he was before, by the free gift and choice of the nation. His profeſſions were plauſible, and his whole behaviour engaging; ſo that he won upon the hearts, even whilſt he loſt the good opinion of his ſubjects, and often balanced their judgment of things, by their perſonal inclination. Theſe qualities and this part of his conduct went a great way to give him credit with his people, and an hold on their affections. But this

* Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE.

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was not all. He obſerved their temper, and he complied with it. He yielded to them in points, from which he had determined, and declared too, that he would never depart. To know when to yield in government, is at leaſt as neceſſary, as to know when to loſe in trade; and he who cannot do the firſt, is ſo little likely to govern a kingdom well, that it is more than probable he would govern a ſhop ill. King CHARLES gave up to the murmurs of his people, not one or two ſuch miniſters as may be found almoſt behind every deſk; thoſe aukward pageants of courts, thoſe wooden images, which princes gild and then worſhip; but ſeveral great and able men, nay, whole cabals of ſuch, who had merit with him, tho they had none with the nation. He ſtarted often out of the true intereſt of his people, but the voice of his people almoſt as often reclaimed him. He made the firſt Dutch war, but he made the triple alliance too. He engaged with France in the war of 1672, but he made a ſeparate peace with Holland. True it is, indeed, that neither the repreſentations of his parliament, nor the deſires of his people, could prevail on him to go farther, and to enter in earneſt into the war againſt France. But the confidence between him and his parliament was ſo broken at that time, that they would not truſt him, nor he them. At this I am not ſurpriſed, and for that very reaſon, I confeſs, I have always been ſo at the ſtrong and repeated inſtances made to force him into that war; ſince it cannot ſurely be better policy to drive a prince into a war, which he has no inclination to make, than it would be to be drawn by him into a war, if he had no ability to conduct it. In home affairs, beſides his frequent conceſſions, whenever the nation took umbrage at his proceedings, he paſſed the teſt and the habeas corpus bills, and many others for the public benefit: and I ſcarce remember any popular act, which ſtopped at the throne in his time, except that about the militia, which he

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apprehended to be a dangerous encroachment on his prerogative, and another in favor of the diſſenters, which was contrived, meanly enough, to be ſtolen off the table in the houſe of lords.

What has been touched here, and in former papers, will be ſufficient to ſhew, in ſome meaſure, how king Charles was enabled to divide a nation ſo united and ſo heated as this nation was, on the diſcovery of the popiſh plot; to oppoſe ſo avowedly and ſo reſolutely the excluſion of his brother; the proſpect of whoſe ſucceeding to the crown was become ſtill more dreadful, even by that ſmall part of Coleman's correſpondence, which had come to light; and yet to attach ſo numerous a party to himſelf, nay to his brother; to lay aſide parliaments for ſeveral years, and not only to ſtand his ground, but to gain ground in the nation, at the ſame time. But there is ſtill ſomething more to be added. He had not only prepared for the ſtorm, but he acquired new ſtrength in the midſt of it; that is, in the proceedings on the popiſh plot, and the bill of excluſion. He would gladly have kept the former out of parliament; but when it was once there, he put on the appearances of great zeal for the proſecution of it. Theſe appearances help'd him to ſcreen his brother; as the ill ſucceſs of the excluſion-bill in the houſe of lords, where it was rejected by ſixty-three againſt thirty, helped to ſkreen himſelf from the violence of the houſe of commons. But that which gave him the principal advantage, in the preſent conteſts, was another management. As ſoon as the firſt preparatory ſteps were made to the bill of excluſion in 1678, he declared himſelf, in a ſpeech to his parliament, ready to paſs any bills to make his people ſafe in the reign of his ſucceſſor, ſo they tended not to impeach the right of ſucceſſion, nor the deſcent of the crown in the true line. He perſiſted in his declaration

to

to the laſt; and if he had done nothing elſe, I imagine that he would have gained no great popularity. When a free people lie under any grievance, or apprehend any danger, and try to obtain their prince's conſent to deliver them from one, or prevent the other, a flat refuſal, on his part, reduces them to the melancholy alternative of continuing to ſubmit to one, and to ſtand expoſed to the other, or of freeing themſelves from both, without his conſent; which can hardly be done by means very conſiſtent with his and their common intereſt. King CHARLES was too wiſe to puſh the nation to ſuch an extremity. He refuſed what his parliament preſſed on him, in the manner and on the principle they preſſed it; but then his refuſal was followed by expedients, which varied the manner, and yet might have been managed ſo as to produce the effect; and which ſeemed to ſave, rather than actually ſaved, the principle. Numbers concurred, at that time, in avowing the principle; and the teſts had made many perſons think religion ſafe; as the king's offers made them think it no fault of his, if it was not made ſafer. The council had prepared ſome expedients; and the limitations, and other proviſions againſt a popiſh ſucceſſor, propoſed directly from the throne by the chancellor in 1679, went a great way towards binding the hands of ſuch a ſucceſſor, and lodging the power, taken from him, in the parliament. But the ſcheme of expedients, debated in the Oxford parliament, was a real excluſion from every thing, but the title of a king. The firſt article baniſhed the duke of York, during his life, to the diſtance of five hundred miles from England, Scotland and Ireland; and the tenth, to mention no more, excluded him ipſo facto, if he came into any of theſe kingdoms; directed that he ſhould ſuffer, in this caſe, as by the former bill, and that the ſovereignty ſhould veſt forthwith in the regent; that is, in the princeſs of Orange. Surely this was not to vote the lion in the lobby into the houſe.

houſe. It would have been to vote him out of the houſe, and lobby both, and only ſuffer him to be called lion ſtill. I am not ignorant of the refinements urged by Sir WILLIAM JONES and others againſt this ſcheme: but I know that men run into errors from both extremes; from that of ſeeing too much, as well as that of ſeeing too little; and that the moſt ſubtle refiners are apt to miſs the true point of political wiſdom, which conſiſts in diſtinguiſhing juſtly between what is abſolutely beſt in ſpeculation, and what is the beſt of things practicable in particular conjunctures. The ſcheme, no doubt, was built on a manifeſt abſurdity, and was liable to many inconveniencies, difficulties and dangers; but ſtill it was the utmoſt that could be hoped for at that moment: and the ſingle conſideration, one would think, ſhould have been this; whether, united under ſuch an act of parliament, they would not have oppoſed the ſucceſſion of the duke of York, with leſs inconveniency, leſs difficulty and danger, than diſunited, and with the laws againſt them. The truth is, that as there were men at this time, deſirous that the king ſhould be on deſperate terms with his parliament, becauſe they were ſo themſelves; in like manner there were others, who deſired, for a reaſon of the ſame nature, that the parliament ſhould be on deſperate terms with the king. Theſe were factious intereſts, and they prevailed againſt the national intereſt; which required that the king ſhould be ſeparated at any rate from his brother, inſtead of being united to him by a fear made common to both. But the dye was thrown; and the leaders of the whig party were reſolved "* to let all lie in confuſion, rather than hearken "to any thing, beſides the excluſion." Obſtinacy provoked obſtinacy. The king grew obſtinate, and ſevere too, againſt his natural eaſineſs and former clemency of temper. The tory

* BURNET'S hiſt.

party

party grew as obſtinate, and as furious on their ſide, according to a natural tendency in the diſpoſition of all parties: and thus the nation was delivered over, on the death of king CHARLES, "à la ſottiſe de ſon frere*; to the folly and madneſs of his brother."

IT was this folly and madneſs however, that cured the folly and madneſs of party. As the common danger approached, the impreſſions of terror which it made, increaſed. Whig and tory then felt them alike, and were brought by them, as drunken men ſometimes are, to their ſenſes. The events of king JAMES's reign, and the ſteps by which the revolution was brought about, are ſo recent, and ſo well known, that I ſhall not deſcend into any particular mention of them. A few general remarks on the behaviour of this prince, and on the behaviour of parties in his reign, and at the revolution, will be ſufficient to wind up the hiſtory of whig and tory, and to prove what I have ſo often aſſerted, that both ſides purged themſelves on this great occaſion, of the imputations laid to their charge by their adverſaries; that the proper and real diſtinction of the two parties expired at this aera, and that altho their ghoſts have continued to haunt and divide us ſo many years afterwards, yet there neither is, nor can be any diviſion of parties at this time, reconcileable with common ſenſe, and common honeſty, among thoſe who are come on the ſtage of the world under the preſent conſtitution, except thoſe of churchmen and diſſenters, thoſe of court and country.

THE behavior and conduct of king JAMES the ſecond would be ſufficient, if there was no other inſtance, and there

* An expreſſion uſed by king CHARLES on many occaſions.

are thouſands, to ſhew that as ſtrong prejudices, however got, are the parents, ſo a weak underſtanding is the nurſe of bigotry, and injuſtice and violence and cruelty its offspring. This prince was above fifty, when he came to the throne. He had great experience of all kinds; particularly of the temper of this nation, and of the impoſſibility to attempt introducing popery, without hazarding his crown. But his experience profited him not. His bigotry drew falſe concluſions from it. He flattered himſelf that he ſhould be able to play parties againſt one another, better than his brother had done; (which, by the way, was the leaſt of his little talents;) and to compleat his deſigns by an authority, which was but too well eſtabliſhed. He paſſed, I think, for a ſincere man. Perhaps, he was ſo; and he ſpoke always with great emphaſis of the word of a king: and yet never was the meaneſt word ſo ſcandalouſly broken as his. In the debate in 1678, about the teſt, when he got a proviſo put in for excepting himſelf, it has been advanced in print, and not denied that I know of, that ſpeaking with "*great earneſtneſs, and with tears in his eyes, he ſo-"lemnly proteſted that whatever his religion might be, it "ſhould only be a private thing between God and his own "ſoul; and that no effect of it ſhould ever appear in the go-"vernment." At his acceſſion to the throne, in council firſt, and after that in full parliament, in the face of the nation, he made the ſtrongeſt declaration in favor of the conſtitution in church and ſtate, and took the moſt ſolemn engagements to defend and ſupport it. But bigotry burſt through all theſe cobwebs; for ſuch they are to men, tranſported by a religious delirium, who acquire a ſtrength that thoſe, who are well, have not, and conſcientiouſly break all the obligations of morality. Theſe admirable diſpoſitions in the king were encouraged by

* BURNET's hiſtory.

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the ſtate in which his brother left and he found the nation, and by the complaiſance of the parliament, which he called ſoon after his acceſſion. They were confirmed, and he was determined to pull off the maſk entirely, by the ill ſucceſs of the duke of MONMOUTH and the earl of ARGYLE. Biſhop BURNET ſpeaks of this parliament very indecently, and I think very untruly. They were neither men of parts, nor eſtates, according to him. The truth is, that the circumſtances under which we were brought by the factious proceedings of both parties, in the late reign, for and againſt the court, were ſuch as might perplex the beſt parts, and puzzle the heads even of the wiſeſt men. A profeſſed, zealous papiſt, in full and quiet poſſeſſion of the throne, and, inſtead of any proviſion made, or any meaſures taken againſt him, the notion and the exerciſe of the prerogative eſtabliſhed at an extravagant height, were ſuch circumſtances, as laid the nation almoſt at the mercy of the king. They therefore, who were the moſt determined not to part with either their religion, or their liberty, and yet had more to loſe in the fray than Dr. BURNET, might be willing to look round them, to wait opportunities, and not undertake raſhly what can ſeldom be undertaken twice. It is impoſſible to believe that their confidence in the king's word was ſuch as they affected. But like drowning men, who ſaw nothing elſe to catch at, they caught at a ſtraw. The duke of MONMOUTH's expedition into England, and the earl of ARGYLE's into Scotland, were ſo far from affording the nation any opportunity of mending their condition, that the declaration of the former might draw ſome of the diſſenters to his ſtandard, as it did; but was calculated to drive the tory party, moſt of the whigs, and in ſhort the bulk of the people from him. The declaration of the latter was founded in the ſolemn league and covenant; and gave ſo much reaſon to apprehend that a revival of the ſame principles, and a renewal of the ſame tyranny

was intended, that we cannot wonder it had no better an effect; tho we lament the fate of a worthy and gallant man, whoſe crime was refuſing a teſt, that ſhould never have been impoſed on proteſtants and freemen, and who had been driven into theſe extreme reſolutions by a ſeries of unjuſt and tyrannical uſage.

THUS were theſe invaſions, in the very beginning of his reign, favorable in ſome reſpects to the deſigns of king JAMES. They fortified, in the minds of men, the jealouſies and fears, which had a few years before formed the tory party, and diſpoſed them by conſequence, at leaſt, to keep meaſures and not break with the king. They gave him the pretence, which he ſeized very readily, of raiſing and keeping up a ſtanding army. But, in the event, they forwarded our deliverance from all the dangers to which we were expoſed under his government, by precipitating his attempts againſt our religion and liberty. The ſame day that the news of the invaſion in Scotland was communicated to the parliament here, the commons voted that great revenue, which they gave him, and gave him for life. After theſe invaſions were over, they voted a ſupply, which was intended for the charge of maintaining the additional forces. They offered to paſs a law for indemnifying his popiſh officers from the penalty they had incurred, and to capacitate ſuch others as he ſhould name in a liſt to be given to the houſe. In ſhort, they ſuffered themſelves to be drawn to the brink of the precipice: but there they ſtopped. They would neither give him the whole ſupply of one million two hundred thouſand pounds, which he aſked, nor ſanctify, by the authority of parliament, the practice of keeping up a ſtanding army in time of peace; but rejected the words moved for that purpoſe. They would neither repeal the teſt and penal laws, nor ſubmit to his diſpenſing, or ſuſpending, which was in effect a repealing power: that

that is, they would not caſt themſelves headlong down the precipice. And becauſe they would not, he quarrelled with them, loſt the ſeven hundred thouſand pounds they had voted, rather than ſuffer them to ſit any longer; and never met them more.

THINGS haſtened now to a deciſion. The king's deſigns were openly avowed, and deſperately puſhed. The church of England oppoſed them with the utmoſt vigor. The diſſenters were cajoled by the court; and they, who had been ready to take arms againſt king CHARLES, becauſe he was unwilling to exclude his brother, and who had taken arms againſt this prince, ſince he was on the throne, became abetters of his uſurpations. It were eaſy to prove this, even by biſhop BURNET's account, as much as that is ſoftened; and if the excuſes, which have been made for their ſilence againſt popery in this critical moment, or for their approving and encouraging the exerciſe of a diſpenſing power, are to be received, one may undertake to excuſe, on the ſame principles of reaſoning, all thoſe inſtances of miſconduct in the church party, which I have preſumed to cenſure ſo freely. But the truth is, theſe excuſes are frivolous. I could quote ſome that are even burleſque. Let us reverence truth therefore, and condemn the diſſenters as frankly, on this occaſion, as we have condemned the members of the church of England on others.

THE revolution ſoon followed. Many of the moſt diſtinguiſhed tories, ſome of thoſe who carried higheſt the doctrines of paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance, were engaged in it, and the whole nation was ripe for it. The whigs were zealous in the ſame cauſe; but their zeal was not ſuch as, I think, it had been ſome years before, a zeal without knowledge: I mean, that it was better tempered, and more prudently conducted. Tho the king was not the better for his experience,

parties

parties were. Both ſaw their errors. The tories ſtopped ſhort in the purſuit of a bad principle. The whigs reformed the abuſe of a good one. Both had ſacrificed their country to their party. Both ſacrificed, on this occaſion, their party to their country. When the tories and the whigs were thus coalited, the latter ſtood no longer in need of any adventitious help. If they did not refuſe the aſſiſtance of thoſe, who had weakened their cauſe more by the jealouſies and fears to which they gave both occaſion and pretence, than they had ſtrengthened it by their number, yet they ſuffered them to have no influence in their councils, no direction of their conduct. The cauſe of liberty was no longer made the cauſe of a party, by being ſet on ſuch a bottom, and puſhed in ſuch a manner, as one party alone approved. The revolution was plainly deſigned to reſtore and ſecure our government, eccleſiaſtical and civil, on true foundations; and whatever might happen to the king, there was no room to ſuſpect any change in the conſtitution. There were ſome, indeed, concerned in this great and glorious undertaking, who had obſtinately preſerved, or lightly taken up the republican and other whimſies, that reigned in the days of uſurpation and confuſion. If they could have prevailed, and it was no fault of theirs they did not, the coalition of parties had been broken; and, inſtead of a revolution, we might have had a civil war, perhaps, not even that ſad chance for our religion and liberty. But this leaven was ſo near worn out, that it could neither corrupt, nor ſeem any longer to corrupt the maſs of the whig party. The party never had been preſbyterians, nor republicans, any more than they had been quakers; any more than the tory party had been papiſts, when, notwithſtanding their averſion to popery, they were undeniably under the accidental influence of popiſh councils. But even the appearances were now rectified. The revolution was a fire, which purged off the droſs of both parties; and the

droſs being purged off, they appeared to be the ſame metal, and anſwered the ſame ſtandard.

I SHALL deliver my thoughts, on ſome other occaſion, concerning the diſputes that aroſe about the ſettlement of the crown after the revolution; and ſhew, if I do not very much deceive myſelf, that no argument can be drawn from thence againſt any thing I have advanced.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

SIR,

THE ſlaviſh principles of paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance, which had ſculked perhaps in ſome old homily before king JAMES the firſt, but were talked, written and preached into vogue in that inglorious reign, and in thoſe of his three ſucceſſors, were renounced at the revolution by the laſt of the ſeveral parties who declared for them. Not only the laity, but the clergy embraced and co-operated in the deliverance which the prince of ORANGE brought them. Some of our prelates joined to invite him over. Their brethren refuſed to ſign an abhorrence of this invitation. The univerſity of Oxford offered him their plate, and aſſociated for him againſt their king. In one word, the conduct of the tories, at this criſis, was ſuch as might have inclined a man to think they had never held reſiſtance unlawful, but had only differed with the whigs about the degree of oppreſſion, or of danger, which it was neceſſary to wait, in order to ſanctify reſiſtance. Now, it may appear at firſt a little ſtrange that theſe principles, which had always gone hand in hand with thoſe of the divine, hereditary, indefeaſable right of kings, that were juſt as well founded in reaſon, in ſupport of which the example of the primitive chriſtians might be pompouſly cited, and to countenance which ſome texts of the bible might be piouſly ſtrained, ſhould not keep their hold, and maintain their influence, as well as the others.

THIS attachment to hereditary right will appear the more ſtrange, if we conſider what regard was ſhewn, at this time, to the difficulties they who had pawned themſelves, as it were, for

for the principles, would be under, when they came to concur in eſtabliſhing a ſettlement repugnant to it. That great and ſolemn reſolution, about the abdication of king JAMES, and the vacancy of the throne, might have been expreſſed in terms much ſtronger and plainer than it was. I have heard there were perſons who had a mind it ſhould be ſo, and who, more attached to the honor, that is, the humor of party, than to the national intereſt, in this great event, would have turned this reſolution, as well as the declaration of the prince of ORANGE, to a more expreſs approbation of the whig, and a more expreſs condemnation of the tory tenets and conduct. But a wiſer and honeſter conſideration prevailed. Inſtead of erecting the new government on the narrow foundations of party ſyſtems, the foundations of it were laid as wide, and made as comprehenſible as they could be. No man, I believe, at this time thinks that the vote aſſerted too little; and ſurely there was no colour of reaſon, on the ſide of thoſe who cavilled againſt it at that time, for aſſerting too much.

THE diſputes about the words abdicate, or deſert, and about the vacancy of the throne, were indeed fitter for a ſchool than a houſe of parliament, and might have been expected in ſome aſſembly of pedants, where young ſtudents exerciſed themſelves in diſputation, but not in ſuch an auguſt aſſembly as that of the lords and commons, met in ſolemn conference upon the moſt important occaſion. The truth is, that they who formed the oppoſition, were reduced to maintain ſtrange paradoxes; ſtranger, in my opinion, than moſt of thoſe which caſt ſo much ridicule on the ſtoics of old. Thus, for inſtance, they were forced to admit that an oppreſſed people might ſeek their remedy in reſiſtance, for they had fought it there themſelves; and yet they oppoſed making uſe of the only remedy, which

could effectually ſecure them againſt returns of the ſame oppreſſion, when reſiſtance had put it in their power, as oppreſſion had given them a right to uſe this remedy. Surely this muſt appear a paradox, and a very abſurd one too, if we conſider that reſiſtance, in all ſuch caſes, is the mean, and future ſecurity the end; and that the former is impertinent, nay, wicked in the higheſt degree, if it be not employed to obtain the latter. Thus again, the ſame men declared themſelves willing to ſecure the nation againſt the return of king JAMES to that throne which he had abdicated, or, according to them, deſerted: nay, ſome of them were ready, if we may credit the anecdotes of that time, to proceed to ſuch extreme reſolutions, as would have been more effectual than juſtifiable in the eyes of mankind; and yet they could not prevail on their ſcrupulous conſciences to declare the throne vacant. They had concurred in the vote, that it was "inconſiſtent with the "laws, liberties and religion of England to have a papiſt rule "over the kingdom." King JAMES had followed the pious example of SIGISMOND, who, not content to loſe the crown of Sweden himſelf for his religion, had carried his ſon away, that he might be bred a papiſt, and loſe it too; and yet they maintained, tho they did not expreſly name him, that if the throne was then, or ſhould be at any time vacant of the father, it muſt be reputed inſtantaneouſly full of the ſon, upon the foundation of this ſilly axiom, that the king never dies. According to this law, and theſe politics, king JAMES and his ſucceſſors, to the twentieth generation, might have continued abroad, a race of royal exiles, preſerving their indefeaſable right to govern, but debarred from the exerciſe of it; whilſt the nation continued, during all this time, from century to century, under the dominion of regents, with regal authority, but without any regal right; an excellent expedient ſure to keep the monarchy in an hereditary ſucceſſion! But there remained

mained none better, on the principles of theſe men, ſince the prince of ORANGE had committed the fatal overſight of neglecting to conquer the nation. His ſword would have cut the gordian knot of hereditary right, and they could have ſubmitted with ſafe conſciences to a conqueror. But to give the crown to a prince, tho they had put the whole adminiſtration into his hands; which, by the way, was high treaſon, unleſs the throne was, what they denied it to be, actually vacant: to give the crown, I ſay, to a prince who would not take it, when it was in his power to take it, without their conſent; to ſettle a new government by agreement and compact, when the glorious opportunity of eſtabliſhing it by force and conqueſt had been unhappily loſt: theſe were propoſitions to which they could not conſent. King JAMES had violated the fundamental laws, which he had promiſed over and over, and ſworn to maintain. He had ſhewn by his firſt eſcape, when nothing was more impoſed on him than to wait the reſolution of a free parliament, that he would renounce his crown rather than ſubmit to ſecure effectually the obſervation of theſe laws. He had made a ſecond eſcape, which was voluntary as well as the firſt, and made on the ſame principle, againſt the intreaties of his friends, and the inſtigations of the ſame council that had directed his former conduct, and on a letter from the queen, claiming his promiſe to do ſo. Notwithſtanding all theſe reaſons, they who maintained the hereditary right of our kings, reduced themſelves, and would have reduced their country, to the abſurd neceſſity of altering their conſtitution, under pretence of preſerving it. No king, except a STUART, was to reign over us: but we might eſtabliſh a doge, a lord archon, a regent; and thus theſe warm aſſertors of monarchy, refuſing to be ſlaves, contended to be republicans. Many more paradoxes of equal extravagance might be cited, which were advanced directly, or which reſulted plainly from the arguments

employed on one ſide of the queſtion in thoſe diſputes; but the inſtances I have cited may ſuffice for our preſent purpoſe, and may ſerve to ſhew, that altho difficulties hard to ſolve in ſpeculation, or to remove in practice, will ariſe in the purſuit of the moſt rational principles, yet ſuch abſurdities as theſe can never ariſe, except from the moſt irrational, and always muſt ariſe from ſuch.

If the perſons who maintained this divine, hereditary, indefeaſable right of our kings, had thought fit to drop theſe principles, when they laid aſide thoſe of paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance, and no tolerable reaſon can be given why they did not, their conduct would have been conſiſtent and uniform on this great occaſion; and this conſiſtency and uniformity would have been productive of great good, by taking away at once even the appearances of all political diviſion in the bulk of the nation. But whilſt they labored to reconcile their preſent conduct to their antient ſyſtem, they were true to neither. They had gone much farther than this would allow, and then they refuſed to go as far as the other required, in order to be ſafe, and therefore in order to be juſtified. They loſt every kind of merit, the chimerical merit of adhering to a ſet of ſilly principles, the real merit of ſacrificing their prejudices to the complete deliverance of their country from the recent danger of popery and arbitrary power. Nay, they did worſe; for the miſchievous conſequences of their conduct were not hurtful to them alone, and at that time alone, but to the public, and even down to theſe times. They furniſhed pretence to factions, who kept up a diviſion under the old names, when the differences were really extinguiſhed by the conduct of both parties, becauſe the conduct of both parties was no longer conformable to the principles imputed to them. The tories had no longer any pretence of fearing the deſigns of the whigs, ſince

ſince the whigs had ſufficiently purged themſelves from all ſuſpicion of republican views, by their zeal to continue monarchical government, and of latitudinarian ſchemes in point of religion, by their ready concurrence in preſerving our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, and by their inſiſting on nothing farther, in favor of the diſſenters, than that indulgence which the church was moſt willing to grant. The whigs had as little pretence of fearing the tories, ſince the tories had purged themſelves, in the moſt ſignal manner, from all ſuſpicion of favoring popery or arbitrary power, by the vigorous reſiſtance they made to both. They had engaged, they had taken the lead in the revolution, and they were fully determined againſt the return of king JAMES. The real eſſences of whig and tory were thus deſtroyed, but the nominal were preſerved, and have done ſince that time a good part of the miſchief which the real did before. The oppoſition made to the ſettlement of the crown brought this about. An over-curious enquiry into the motives of this oppoſition would be a taſk too invidious for me to undertake. Something however may be ſaid upon it. We may ſay in general, without offence, that private ambition mingled itſelf early in the great and national concerns of the revolution; and that it did ſo more, as the proſpect of a new ſettlement, and of the elevation of the prince of ORANGE approached. Expectations were raiſed, diſappointments were given or foreſeen, and a variety of motives, of the ſame kind, began to influence very ſtrongly the conduct of the principal actors. Some endeavoured to lay the foundations of their future fortune by demonſtrations of a perſonal attachment to the prince, which were carried on, I doubt, a little too independently of the regard due to their country, in ſome caſes; particularly, if I miſtake not, in that of the declaration of rights, of which we may pronounce, and experience will juſtify us, that it was too looſe, too imperfect, and nothing leſs than proportionable

to the importance of the occaſion, and the favorable circumſtances of the conjuncture. Others there were, who imagined that the ſhorteſt and ſureſt way for them to take, in purſuit of the ſame view, was to make themſelves conſiderable by oppoſition, to form a party, and maintain a ſtruggle for perſonal power, under the pretence and umbrage of principle. This was, without doubt, the motive of ſome particular leading men, and could not be, at leaſt at firſt, the motive of numbers. But there was another motive, which eaſily became that of numbers, becauſe it aroſe out of a fund common to all men, the perverſity of human nature, according to an obſervation made in one of theſe letters. Whilſt the event of the prince of ORANGE's expedition was undecided, men remained under the full influence of their fears, which had determined them to act againſt their prejudices. But when the revolution was ſecure, and theſe fears were calmed, theſe prejudices reſumed in ſome degree their former power, and the more for being revived and encouraged by men of reputation and authority, who argued for ſome, and might as reaſonably have argued for all the errors, in contradiction to which moſt of them had acted, nay, and were ready to act. With ſuch views, and by ſuch means, were many brought, at this time, to entangle themſelves in a maze of inextricable abſurdities. Had they owned candidly and fairly that their principles, as well as thoſe of the whigs, were carried too high in the former diſputes of parties, and that theſe principles could not be true, ſince they found themſelves actually in a ſituation, wherein it was not poſſible to act agreeably to them, without manifeſt abſurdity, the diſtinction, as well as the difference of whig and tory had been at an end. But contrary meaſures produced a contrary effect. They kept up the appearances, and they could keep up no more, of a whig and a tory party, and with theſe appearances a great part of the old animoſity. The two

names

names were founded about the nation, and men who ſaw the ſame enſigns flying, were not wiſe enough to perceive, or not honeſt enough to own, that the ſame cauſe was no longer concerned, but liſted themſelves on either ſide, as their prejudices at firſt, and their inclinations, or other motives, which aroſe in the progreſs of their conteſts, directed them afterwards: whigs very often under the tory ſtandard, tories very often under the whig ſtandard.

This general repreſentation, which I have made of the ſtate of parties at the revolution, is, I am verily perſuaded, exactly juſt; and it might be ſupported by many particular proofs, which I chuſe rather to ſuggeſt than to mention. But if any doubt remains, let us analyſe the ſeveral parties of that time a little more, reduce them to their firſt and real principles, and then pronounce whether we find the whig or the tory party ſubſiſting among them.

In the firſt place, there was a party that concurred in making the new ſettlement; a party that prevailed in parliament, and was by much the majority of the nation out of it. Were the whigs this majority? was this party a whig party? No man will preſume to affirm ſo notorious an untruth. The whigs were far from being this majority, and king James muſt have died on the throne, if the tories had not concurred to place the prince of Orange there in his ſtead. Was this party a tory party then? Certainly no. The whigs had been zealous in the ſame cauſe, and had contributed to make it ſucceſsful by their temper, as well as their zeal, by waiting the time of the tories, or rather the maturity of the conjuncture, and by moderating their principles and their conduct in favor of that coalition, without which the revolution could have ſucceeded no more than the excluſion did. We find then here neither a whig nor a tory

a tory party; for in coalitions of this kind, where two parties are melted as it were into one, neither of them can be said, with truth and propriety, to exiſt.

THERE was another party directly oppoſite to this; a certain number of men, on whom the original taint tranſmitted down from king JAMES the firſt, remained ſtill in the full ſtrength of its malignity. Theſe men adhered to thoſe principles, in the natural ſenſe and full extent of them, which the tories had profeſſed. But yet, the tories having renounced theſe principles, or diſtinguiſhed themſelves out of any obligation to obſerve them, this inconſiderable faction could not be deemed the tory party, but received the name of jacobite with more propriety.

Two other parties there were at this time, formed on one common principle, but widely different however, by the different conſequences they drew from it. The principle I mean, is that contained in the diſtinction of a king de jure, and a king de facto. The famous ſtatute of Henry the ſeventh authoriſed this diſtinction. The ſtatute was deſigned principally, no doubt, for the advantage of the ſubjects, that they might be ſafe, whichever ſide prevailed, in an age when the epidemical folly of fighting for different pretenders had ſpilt oceans of blood on the ſcaffold, as well as in the field; and yet the ſtatute was deſigned for the ſervice of kings de facto too, and particularly of Henry the ſeventh. The author of "hereditary right aſſerted" would have us believe otherwiſe; and yet ſurely nothing can be more evident than this, that if king HENRY the ſeventh's right had been as unqueſtionable as he ſuppoſes, and I preſume to deny that it was, yet he would have been declared a king de facto only, if the intrigues of the ducheſs of BURGUNDY, and the faction of YORK had ſucceeded; and conſequently

quently this proviſion for the ſafety of his adherents, in that poſſible contingency, gave ſtrength to him, as it would have given ſtrength to any other prince, whilſt it attached his adherents to him by the apparent ſecurity it provided; for this author contends that it did not eſtabliſh a real ſecurity, and adviſes us to ſuſpend our judgment on the validity of this ſtatute, till we ſee what the "opinion of parliament or the judges "may be, whenever a king de jure ſhall diſpoſſeſs a king de "facto." He refers us ad Calendas Graecas.

But there are two obſervations to be made to our preſent purpoſe on this ſtatute, which ſeem to me natural and plain. Firſt, it confounds in effect the very diſtinction it ſeems to make; ſince it ſecures alike, and, by ſecuring alike, authoriſes alike thoſe who adhere to the king de jure, and thoſe who adhere to the king de facto, provided they adhere to the king in poſſeſſion. Secondly, it was contrived to hinder people, according to my lord Bacon's ſenſe of it, "from buſying themſelves in prying into the king's title, and that ſubjects might "not trouble themſelves with enquiries into the juſtneſs of the "king's title or quarrel." Now, upon the foundation of this diſtinction and this ſtatute, thus underſtood, they who demurred on the ſettlement of the crown at the revolution, might plauſibly, tho I think very unreaſonably, reſolve neither to vote, nor act themſelves, againſt thoſe maxims and principles which they had entertained and profeſſed, as maxims of law, and principles of the conſtitution, and yet reſolve to ſubmit ſincerely, and adhere faithfully to a new eſtabliſhment, when it was once made. But the other of the two parties I mentioned drew from the ſame principle, of diſtinguiſhing between a king de facto and a king de jure, a very different concluſion. They acknowledged one king, and held their allegiance ſtill due to another. They bound themſelves by oath to preſerve a ſettle-

ment which they pretended themſelves in conſcience obliged to ſubvert. This was to juſtify perfidy, to ſanctify perjury, to remove the ſacred boundaries of right and wrong, and, as far as in them lay, to teach mankind to call good evil, and evil good.

Such were the three diviſions into which men broke at the revolution, in oppoſing the ſettlement then made, whilſt the great body of the nation concurred in it, and whig and tory formed in reality but one party. The firſt of theſe diviſions continued, and became a faction in the ſtate, but made no proſelytes, and is worn out by time. The principle of the ſecond was wrong, but it could not be reputed dangerous whilſt it laſted, and it ſeems to have been built on ſo narrow and ſlippery a foundation, that it did not continue long in force. I may be more bold in aſſerting this, ſince if we look back to the aera of the revolution, and to the times which followed, we ſhall find among thoſe who voted for a regent, not a king, on the abdication of king James, ſome illuſtrious perſons who ſerved king William faithfully, who adhered inviolably to our new eſtabliſhment, and who have been diſtinguiſhed friends of the ſucceſſion that hath now taken place. That there have been perſons, who deſerved to be ranked under the third head, is too notorious to be denied; but I perſuade myſelf that this diviſion hath conſiſted always of a flux body. On one hand, it is ſcarce poſſible to believe that any number of men ſhould be ſo hardened, as to avow to themſelves, and to one another, the acting and perſiſting to act on a principle ſo repugnant to every notion and ſentiment that harbour in the breaſts of ſocial creatures. On the other, we know how the ſallies and tranſports of party, on ſome occaſions, can hurry even reaſonable men to act on the moſt abſurd, and honeſt men to act on the moſt unjuſtifiable principles, or both one and the other

on

on no principle at all, according as the object which the prevailing paſſion preſents to them directs. This hath been the caſe of many ſince the revolution, and there are ſome of all ſides, I believe, ſtill alive, ſure I am that there were ſome a few years ago, who know that no ſide is abſolutely unexceptionable in this reſpect.

I am, SIR, &c.

LETTER IX.

SIR,

BUT whatever the ſtate of parties was at the revolution, and for ſome time afterwards, the ſettlement made at that time having continued, that ſtate of parties hath changed gradually, tho ſlowly, and hath received at length, according to the neceſſary courſe of things, a total alteration. This alteration would have been ſooner wrought, if the attempt I have mentioned, to defend principles no longer defenſible, had not furniſhed the occaſion and pretence to keep up the appearances of a tory and a whig party. Some of thoſe who had been called tories furniſhed this pretence. They who had been called whigs ſeized and improved it. The advantages to one ſide, the diſadvantages to the other, the miſchiefs to the whole, which have enſued, I need not deduce. It ſhall ſuffice to obſerve, that theſe appearances were the more eaſy to be kept up, becauſe ſeveral men, who had ſtood conſpicuous in oppoſition to one another before the revolution, continued an oppoſition, tho not the ſame, afterwards. Freſh provocations were daily given, and freſh pretences for diviſion daily taken. Theſe conteſts were preſent; they recalled thoſe that had paſt in the time of king CHARLES the ſecond, and both ſides forgot that union which their common danger and their common intereſt had formed at the revolution. Old reproaches were renewed, new ones invented, againſt the party called whigs, when they were as complaiſant to a court as ever the tories had been; againſt the party called tories, when they were as jealous of public liberty and as frugal of public money as ever the whigs had been. Danger to the church, on one ſide, and danger to the ſtate, on the other, were apprehended from men who meant no harm

harm to either; for tho diſſenters mingled themſelves on one ſide, and jacobites on the other, and notwithſtanding the leanings of parties in favor of thoſe, by whom they were abetted, yet is it a certain truth, that the ſtruggle was in the main for power, not principle; and that there was no formal deſign laid on one ſide to deſtroy the church, nor on the other the ſtate. The cavils which may be made, and the facts which may be cited, ſome of older, and ſome of freſher date, againſt what hath been here ſaid, do not eſcape me. Men of knowledge, and of cool and candid thought, will anſwer one, and account for the other, without my help; and I cannot reſolve, for the ſake of the paſſionate, nor even of the ignorant, to deſcend upon this ſubject into a greater detail.

I PASS to that which is cloſer to my preſent purpoſe, and of more immediate uſe; and I ſay, that as the natural diſpoſitions of men are altered and formed into different moral characters by education, ſo the ſpirit of a conſtitution of government, which is confirmed, improved and ſtrengthened by the courſe of events, and eſpecially by thoſe of fruitleſs oppoſition, in a long tract of time, will have a proportionable influence on the reaſoning, the ſentiments, and the conduct of thoſe who are ſubject to it. A different ſpirit and contrary prejudices may prevail for a time, but the ſpirit and principles of the conſtitution will prevail at laſt. If one be unnatural, and the other abſurd, and that is the caſe in many governments, a vigorous exerciſe of power, ſignal rewards, ſignal puniſhments, and a variety of other ſecondary means, which in ſuch conſtitutions are never wanting, will however maintain, as long as they are employed, both the ſpirit and the principles. But if the ſpirit and principles of a conſtitution be agreeable to nature and the true ends of government, which is the caſe of the preſent conſtitution of the Britiſh government, they want no ſuch means

to make them prevail. They not only flouriſh without them, but they would fade and die away with them. As liberty is nouriſhed and ſupported by ſuch a ſpirit and ſuch principles, ſo they are propagated by liberty. Truth and reaſon are often able to get the better of authority in particular minds; but truth and reaſon, with authority on their ſide, will carry numbers, bear down prejudices, and become the very genius of a people. The progreſs they make is always ſure, but ſometimes not obſervable by every eye. Contrary prejudices may ſeem to maintain themſelves in vigor, and theſe prejudices may be kept up long by paſſion and by artifice. But when truth and reaſon continue to act without reſtraint, a little ſooner or a little later, and often when this turn is leaſt expected, the prejudices vaniſh at once, and truth and reaſon triumph without any rival.

The conſtitution of England had been ſeen in two very different lights for almoſt a century before the revolution; ſo that there is no room to be ſurpriſed at the great oppoſition that appeared, when the whig and tory parties aroſe a very few years before that aera, between principles which, as oppoſite as they were, each ſide pretended to eſtabliſh on the nature of one and the ſame conſtitution. How this happened hath been often hinted, and I have not here room to explain any farther. Let us be ſatisfied that it is no longer the caſe. Our conſtitution is no longer a myſtery; the power of the crown is now exactly limited, the chimaera of prerogative removed, and the rights of the ſubject are no longer problematical, tho ſome things neceſſary to the more effectual ſecurity of them may be ſtill wanting. Under this conſtitution the greateſt part of the men now alive were born. They lie under no pretence of obligation to any other, and to the ſupport of this they are bound by all the ties of ſociety, and all the motives of intereſt.

Let

Let us prove what we advance; and that we may do ſo ad homines, let us borrow our argument from the great champion of hereditary right. Having mentioned in his introduction what he endeavours pompouſly, but vainly, to eſtabliſh in his book in favor of hereditary right, "a preſcription of "nine centuries, a continual claim of five hundred and fifty "years," he attempts to convince us by a "novel law, and "a modern conſtitution." This modern conſtitution is the act of recognition, in the firſt of king James the firſt. The declarations there made in favor of hereditary right, are no doubt as ſtrong as words can frame, and the words are ſuch as would tempt one to think, by the fuſtian they compoſe, that his majeſty himſelf had penned them. From hence it is concluded, that ſince "the vows and acts of fathers---bind their "poſterity---This act, till the ſociety hath revoked it lawfully, "lays the ſame obligation on every member of the ſociety, as "if he had perſonally conſented to it."------If this act then was lawfully revoked, or repealed, another novel law, contrary to it, might be made equally binding; but neither this act, nor the act of the twelfth of Charles the ſecond, affirming the crown to appertain by juſt and undoubted right to the king, his heirs and lawful ſucceſſors, having been expreſly repealed, we ſtill lie under the ſame obligations, and every ſettlement, contrary to them, and by conſequence the ſettlement made at the revolution, is unlawful. Now I aſk, was not the will of Henry the eighth, which excluded the whole Scotiſh line, made in purſuance, and by the authority of an act paſſed in the twenty-fifth year of his reign? Hath not this author juſtified the validity of this will much to his own ſatisfaction, and, I believe, to that of his readers? Was this will lawfully revoked? Was this ſtatute expreſly repealed? I aſk farther, whether hereditary right, and the obligations of ſubjects to it, could be made immutable and eternal, as this author aſſerts that they were by the act of recognition,

cognition, without a manifeſt contradiction to the act of queen ELIZABETH, which declares the power of parliament to limit and bind the ſucceſſion to the crown? Was this act expreſly repealed? That king JAMES the firſt ſucceeded lawfully againſt law, our author is fond to maintain; and the propoſition is not unlike that of ſome popiſh caſuiſts, who aſſert that his holineſs "jure poteſt contra jus decernere, can decree rightfully "againſt right." But if theſe queſtions are fairly anſwered, it will reſult from ſuch anſwers, and from the arguments I have quoted, that this novel law, this modern conſtitution, is a meer illuſion; that it never bound any member of the ſociety; and that the parliament had as much right to make the ſettlement in 1688, notwithſtanding the act of recognition, as the parliament had to make this act in 1603, notwithſtanding the two acts I have mentioned, and the will of HENRY the eighth, made by virtue of the firſt of them. This wayward and forlorn hereditary right muſt therefore fall to the ground, or be ſupported by the ſuppoſed preſcription of nine centuries, and claim of five and a half, which no intelligent man who reads this book, will be perſuaded that the author hath proved a jot better, than the uninterrupted ſucceſſion of popes, from St. PETER down to his preſent holineſs, is proved by the learned antiquaries of Italy. If this act of recognition be urged, as it ſometimes is, to ſhew the declared ſenſe of the three eſtates of the kingdom, which declaration was obtained, it ſeems, in an hurry, ſince the act was read three times in one houſe the ſame day; the declared ſenſe of the three eſtates, not pronounced in an hurry, but after the moſt ſolemn debates and conferences, may be urged with much greater weight, in favor of our preſent ſettlement. If this act of recognition, notwithſtanding what hath been objected, be urged as a law which had the aſſent of a king, in oppoſition to the proceedings of the convention, by which king WILLIAM and queen MARY

were

were raiſed to the throne, the anſwer is obvious and concluſive. The circumſtances of the two caſes are very different, but when they come to be weighed in a fair balance, thoſe which attended the ſettlement of the crown on the revolution, will be found at leaſt as conformable to reaſon, to law, and to practice, as thoſe which attended the eſtabliſhment of the STUART family. Queen ELIZABETH deſigned king JAMES the firſt to be her ſucceſſor; the nation concurred to make him ſo; neither ſhe nor they paid any regard to the law which ſtood in his way. Their reaſons for acting in this manner are eaſy to be diſcovered in the hiſtory of that time, and on the ſame authority we may certainly conclude, that they would not have acted in this manner, if king JAMES had been, like his mother, a profeſſed papiſt. Thus he got into the throne, and when he was there, he got, like other kings, ſuch a title as he choſe to ſtand upon, agnized, or recognized by his parliament. The ſettlement at the revolution was made by a convention of the lords ſpiritual and temporal, and a full and free repreſentative of the whole body of the people. When king WILLIAM and queen MARY were once ſettled in the throne, this ſettlement was continued and confirmed by an aſſemblage of all the legiſlative powers. He who will diſpute the validity of theſe proceedings, muſt ſhew therefore firſt of all, what hath never yet been ſhewn, no, not by the author I have ſo often quoted, the invalidity of the proceedings of thoſe parliaments, which raiſed EDWARD the third and HENRY the fourth to the throne, which were called as irregularly, tho by writs in the names of EDWARD the ſecond and RICHARD the ſecond, as it can be pretended that the convention was. He muſt ſhew the invalidity of the proceedings even of that aſſembly, by which CHARLES the ſecond was called home, till their proceedings became valid by a ſubſequent confirmation. He muſt ſhew farther, how any of the laws of the princes of the

the houſe of LANCASTER came to be conſtantly received and executed, a little better than the author of "Hereditary right "aſſerted" hath done, by aſſuring us on his word that it was by the "ſufferance of EDWARD the fourth and his ſucceſſors, "and the approbation of the people." He muſt account for the continuance in force of the laws of RICHARD the third, and of HENRY the ſeventh, a little better than the ſame author does, by the deficiency of HENRY the ſeventh's title, which upon another occaſion he magnifies, tho upon this he affirms it to have been no better than that of RICHARD the third, and by the great reſpect of HENRY the eighth for his father. When this hath been once ſhewn, it will be time to think of a reply. In the mean while we will obſerve, that beſides the paſſion and party-ſpirit which poſſeſs almoſt all thoſe who write on this ſubject, there is a diſtinction which ſhould be conſtantly made in caſes of this nature, and which they never make, or never make exactly enough. They compare the proceedings without comparing the ſituation. Neceſſity and ſelf-preſervation are the great laws of nature, and may well diſpenſe with the ſtrict obſervation of the common forms of any particular conſtitution. Either the convention muſt have fallen into the abſurdities I have already mentioned, or have called back king JAMES, which would have been ſtill a greater abſurdity, or have left their country in abſolute anarchy, or have done what they did. What they did, was done as near as poſſible to the ſpirit of our conſtitution, the forms of our laws, and the examples of former times. They had the merit, their poſterity hath the benefit, nay, he who would ſay that they had the guilt, not the merit, muſt ſtill allow that their poſterity hath the benefit, without ſharing the guilt; and, upon the whole matter, I will venture to aſſert, that he who ſcruples, or pretends to ſcruple, at this time, the validity of our preſent conſtitution, is no wiſer, or elſe no honeſter, than he would

be, who ſhould ſcruple, or pretend to ſcruple, the validity of magna charta. I have often wiſhed that ſome profound antiquary of much leiſure, would write an elaborate treatiſe, to aſſert royal prerogative againſt the great charter, as well as hereditary right againſt the revolution. I am perſuaded that he would ſucceed alike in both. Why, indeed, ſhould a charter, extorted by force, and therefore vicious in its principle, ſtand on a better foot, or have more regard paid to it, than a ſettlement made in oppoſition to a divine, and therefore indefeaſable right? I ſay, and therefore indefeaſable; becauſe if it be not proved to be ſomething more than human, it will hardly be proved indefeaſable. But I quit this ſubject; upon which, perhaps, you may think I have ſpent my time as ill, as I ſhould have done if I had preached againſt the Koran at Paul's. It is time to ſpeak of the motives of intereſt, by which we are bound, as well as by the ties of duty, to ſupport the preſent conſtitution.

Upon this head a few words will be ſufficient, ſince I preſume that no prejudices can be ſtrong enough to create much diverſity of opinion in a caſe ſo very clear, and capable of being ſtated ſo ſhortly. Whether the revolution altered our old conſtitution for the better, or renewed it, and brought it back to the firſt principles, and nearer to the primitive inſtitution, ſhall not be diſputed here. I think the latter, and every man muſt think that one or the other was neceſſary, who conſiders, in the firſt place, how the majeſty and authority of the prince began to ſwell above any pitch, proportionable to the rank of chief magiſtrate, or ſupreme head, in a free ſtate; by how many arts the prerogative of the crown had been ſtretched, and how many precedents, little favorable to liberty, had been ſet, even before the acceſſion of the Scotiſh line; and who conſiders, in the next place, the direct ten-

dency, confirmed by experience, of thoſe principles of government, ſo frequently mentioned, which compoſed an avowed ſyſtem of tyranny and eſtabliſhed ſlavery as a political, a moral, and a religious obligation, which king JAMES the firſt was too ſucceſsful in eſtabliſhing, but neither he nor his deſcendants were able to purſue. What theſe conſiderations made neceſſary, was done at the revolution, at leaſt, ſo far as to put it into our power to do the reſt. A ſpirit of liberty, tranſmitted down from our Saxon anceſtors, and the unknown ages of our government, preſerved itſelf through one almoſt continual ſtruggle, againſt the uſurpations of our princes, and the vices of our people; and they, whom neither the PLANTAGENETS nor the TUDORS could enſlave, were incapable of ſuffering their rights and privileges to be raviſhed from them by the STUARTS. They bore with the laſt king of this unhappy race, till it was ſhameful, as it muſt have been fatal, to bear any longer; and whilſt they aſſerted their liberties, they refuted and anticipated, by their temper and their patience, all the objections which foreign and domeſtic abettors of tyranny are apt to make againſt the conduct of our nation towards their kings. Let us juſtify this conduct by perſiſting in it, and continue to ourſelves the peculiar honor of maintaining the freedom of our Gothic inſtitution of government, when ſo many other nations, who enjoyed the ſame, have loſt theirs.

IF a divine, indefeaſable, hereditary right to govern a community be once acknowledged; a right independent of the community, and which veſts in every ſucceſſive prince immediately on the death of his predeceſſor, and previouſly to any engagement taken on his part towards the people; if the people once acknowledge themſelves bound to ſuch princes by the ties of paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance, by an allegiance unconditional, and not reciprocal to protection; if a kind of

oral

oral law, or myſterious cabbala, which phariſees of the black gown and the long robe are always at hand to report and interpret as a prince deſires, be once added, like a ſupplemental code, to the known laws of the land: then, I ſay, ſuch princes have the power, if not the right, given them, of commencing tyrants; and princes who have the power, are prone to think that they have the right. Such was the ſtate of king and people before the revolution. By the revolution, and the ſettlement ſince made, this ſtate hath received conſiderable alterations. A king of Britain is now, ſtrictly and properly, what kings ſhould always be, a member, but the ſupreme member, or the head of a political body: part of one individual, ſpecific whole, in every reſpect, diſtinct from it, or independent of it in none: he can move no longer in another orbit from his people, and, like ſome ſuperior planet, attract, repel, influence, and direct their motions by his own. He and they are parts of the ſame ſyſtem, intimately joined and co-operating together, acting and acted upon, limiting and limited, controling and controled by one another; and when he ceaſes to ſtand in this relation to them, he ceaſes to ſtand in any. The ſettlements, by virtue of which he governs, are plainly original contracts. His inſtitution is plainly conditional, and he may forfeit his right to allegiance, as undeniably and effectually, as the ſubject may forfeit his right to protection. There are no longer any hidden reſerves of authority, to be let out on occaſion, and to overflow the rights and privileges of the people. The laws of the land are known, and they are the ſole ſprings, from whence the prince can derive his pretenſions, and the people theirs. It would be to no purpoſe to illuſtrate any farther a matter which begins to be ſo well underſtood; or to deſcend into a more particular enumeration of the advantages that reſult, or may reſult, from our preſent ſettlement. No man, who does not prefer ſlavery to liberty, or a more precarious

carious ſecurity to a better, will declare for ſuch a government, as our national diviſions, and a long courſe, ſeldom interrupted, of improvident complaiſance to the crown, had enabled king JAMES the ſecond to eſtabliſh againſt ſuch a government as was intended by the ſubſequent ſettlement: and if there be any ſuch man, I declare that I neither write to him nor for him.

I MAY aſſume therefore, without fearing to be accuſed of begging the queſtion, that the conſtitution under which we now live, is preferable to that which prevailed at any time before the revolution. We are arrived, after many ſtruggles, after a deliverance almoſt miraculous, and ſuch an one as no nation hath reaſon to expect twice, and after having made ſome honeſt improvements on the advantages of our new conſtitution, very near to that full ſecurity, under which men who are free and ſollicitous to continue ſo, may ſit down, not without watchfulneſs, for that is never to be ſuffered to relax under ſuch a government as ours, but without anxiety. The ſum therefore of all theſe diſcourſes, and of all our exhortations to one another, is, and ought to be, that we ſhould not ſtop ſhort in ſo important a work. It was begun at the revolution; but he who thinks it was perfected then, or hath been perfected ſince, will find himſelf very much miſtaken. The foundations were laid then. We proceeded for ſome time after that, like the Jews in rebuilding their temple; we carried on the holy work with one hand, and held our ſwords in the other to defend it. That diſtraction, that danger is over, and we betray the cauſe of liberty without any color of excuſe, if we do not complete the glorious building, which will laſt to ages yet remote, if it be once finiſhed, and will mouldér away and fall into ruins, if it remain longer in this imperfect ſtate.

Now

Now that we may ſee the better how to proceed in the cauſe of liberty, to complete the freedom, and to ſecure the duration of our preſent conſtitution, it will be of uſe, I think, to conſider what obſtacles lie, or may hereafter lie, in our way, and of what nature that oppoſition is, or may hereafter be, which we may expect to meet. In order to this, let us once more analyſe our political diviſions; thoſe which may poſſibly exiſt now, or hereafter, as we did thoſe which were formed at the revolution.

ONE poſſible diviſion then is that of men angry with the government, and yet reſolved to maintain the conſtitution. This may be the caſe at any time; under the preſent wiſe, virtuous and triumphant adminiſtration, and therefore to be ſure at any other.

A SECOND poſſible diviſion is that of men averſe to the government, becauſe they are ſo to the conſtitution, which I think can never be the caſe of many; or averſe to the conſtitution, becauſe they are ſo to the government, which I think may be the caſe of more. Both of theſe tend to the ſame point. One would ſubvert the government, that they might change the conſtitution. The other would ſacrifice the conſtitution, that they might ſubvert the government.

A THIRD poſſible diviſion, and I ſeek no more, is that of men attached to the government; or, to ſpeak more properly, to the perſons of thoſe who govern; or, to ſpeak more properly ſtill, to the power, profit, or protection they acquire by the favor of theſe perſons, but enemies to the conſtitution.

Now, as to the firſt and ſecond of theſe poſſible diviſions, if there be any ſuch among us, I do not apprehend that we are

are at preſent, or can be hereafter in much danger, or that the cauſe of liberty can meet with much oppoſition from them; tho the ſecond have certainly views more likely to bring ſlavery upon us, than to promote liberty; and tho prudence requires that we ſhould be on our guard againſt both. The firſt, indeed, might hope to unite even the bulk of the nation to them, in a weak and oppreſſive reign. If grievances ſhould grow intolerable under ſome prince as yet unborn; if redreſs ſhould become abſolutely deſperate; if liberty itſelf ſhould be in imminent peril; the nature of our conſtitution would juſtify the reſiſtance, that we ought to believe well enough of poſterity to perſuade ourſelves would be made in ſuch an exigency. But without ſuch an exigency, particular men would flatter themſelves extremely, if they hoped to make the nation angry becauſe they were ſo. Private motives can never influence numbers. When a nation revolts, the injury is national. This caſe therefore is remote, improbable, nay, impoſſible, under the lenity, juſtice, and heroical ſpirit of the preſent government; and if I mentioned ſuch an imaginary party, it was only done that I might omit none which can be ſuppoſed. The projects of the ſecond diviſion, ſtated in the ſame hypothetical manner, are ſurely too extravagant, and their deſigns too wicked to be dangerous. Diſputes may ariſe hereafter, in ſome diſtant time, about miniſters, perhaps about kings; but I perſuade myſelf that this conſtitution will be, as it ought to be always, diſtinguiſhed from, and preferred to both, by the Britiſh nation. Reaſons muſt ariſe in proceſs of time, from the very nature of man, to oppoſe miniſters and kings too; but none can ariſe, in the nature of things, to oppoſe ſuch a conſtitution as ours. Better miniſters, better kings, may be hereafter often wanted, and ſometimes found, but a better conſtituted government never can. Should there be therefore ſtill any ſuch men as we here

ſuppoſe,

ſuppoſe, among us, they cannot expect, if they are in their ſenſes, a national concurrence: and ſurely a little reflection will ſerve to ſhew them, that the ſame reaſons which make them weaker now than they were ſome years ago, muſt make them weaker ſome years hence than they are now.

As to the third diviſion, if any ſuch there be, it is in that our greateſt and almoſt our whole danger centers. The others cannot overthrow, but theſe may undermine our liberty. Capable of being admitted into power in all courts, and more likely than other men to be ſo in every court except the preſent, whoſe approved penetration and ſpotleſs innocence give a certain excluſion to them, they may prevent any farther ſecurities from being procured to liberty, till thoſe already eſtabliſhed are diſſolved or perverted. Since then our principal danger muſt in all times ariſe from thoſe who belong to this diviſion, it is neceſſary to ſhew, before we conclude theſe diſcourſes, by what means ſuch men may carry on their pernicious deſigns with effect, and by what means they may be defeated. Theſe conſiderations will lead us to fix that point, wherein men of all denominations ought to unite, and do unite, and to ſtate the ſole diſtinction of parties, which can be made with truth at this time amongſt us.

I am, SIR, &c.

LETTER X.

SIR,

IT may be aſked, perhaps, how men who are friends to a government, can be enemies at the ſame time to the conſtitution upon which that government is founded. But the anſwer will be eaſy, if we conſider theſe two things: firſt, the true diſtinction, ſo often confounded in writing, and almoſt always in converſation, between conſtitution and government. By conſtitution we mean, whenever we ſpeak with propriety and exactneſs, that aſſemblage of laws, inſtitutions and cuſtoms, derived from certain fixed principles of reaſon, directed to certain fixed objects of public good, that compoſe the general ſyſtem, according to which the community hath agreed to be governed. By government we mean, whenever we ſpeak in the ſame manner, that particular tenor of conduct which a chief magiſtrate, and inferior magiſtrates under his direction and influence, hold in the adminiſtration of public affairs. We call this a good government, when the execution of the laws, the obſervation of the inſtitutions and cuſtoms, in ſhort, the whole adminiſtration of public affairs, is wiſely purſued, and with a ſtrict conformity to the principles and objects of the conſtitution. We call it a bad government, when it is adminiſtered on other principles, and directed to other objects, either wickedly or weakly, either by obtaining new laws, which want this conformity, or by perverting old ones which had it; and when this is done without law, or in open violation of the laws, we term it a tyrannical government. In a word, and to bring this home to our own caſe, conſtitution is the rule by which our princes ought to govern at all times; government is that by which they actually do govern at any par-

particular time. One may remain immutable; the other may, and as human nature is conſtituted, muſt vary. One is the criterion by which we are to try the other; for ſurely we have a right to do ſo, ſince if we are to live in ſubjection to the government of our kings, our kings are to govern in ſubjection to the conſtitution; and the conformity or non-conformity of their government to it, preſcribes the meaſure of our ſubmiſſion to them, according to the principles of the revolution, and of our preſent ſettlement; in both of which, tho ſome remote regard was had to blood, yet the preſervation of the conſtitution manifeſtly determined the community to the choice then made of the perſons who ſhould govern. Another thing to be conſidered is this: when perſons are ſpoken of as friends to the government, and enemies to the conſtitution, the term friendſhip is a little proſtituted, in compliance with common uſage. Such men are really incapable of friendſhip; for real friendſhip can never exiſt among thoſe who have baniſhed virtue and truth. They have no affection to any but themſelves; no regard to any intereſt except their own. Their ſole attachments are ſuch as I mentioned in the laſt letter, attachments to power and profit, and when they have contracted a load of infamy and guilt in the purſuit of theſe, an attachment to that protection, which is ſufficient to procure them appearances of conſideration, and real impunity. They may bear the ſemblance of affection to their prince, and of zeal for his government; but they who are falſe to the cauſe of their country, will not be true to any other; and the very ſame miniſter who exalts his maſter's throne on the ruins of the conſtitution, that he may govern without control, or retire without danger, would do the reverſe of this, if any turn of affairs enabled him to compound, in that manner, the better for himſelf.

UNDER a prince therefore tolerably honeſt, or tolerably wiſe, ſuch men as theſe will have no great ſway; at leaſt, they will not hold it long. Such a prince will know, that to unite himſelf to them, is to diſunite himſelf from his people; and that he makes a ſtupid bargain, if he prefers trick to policy, expedient to ſyſtem, and a cabal to the nation. Reaſon and experience will teach him that a prince who does ſo, muſt govern weakly, ignominiouſly and precariouſly; whilſt he, who engages all the hearts, and employs all the heads and hands of his people, governs with ſtrength, with ſplendor, and with ſafety, and is ſure of riſing to a degree of abſolute power, by maintaining liberty, which the moſt ſucceſsful tyrant could never reach by impoſing ſlavery. But how few men, (and princes, by their leaves, are men) have been found in times paſt, or can be hoped for in times to come, capable of governing by ſuch arts as theſe? Some cannot propoſe the ends, nor ſome employ the means; for ſome are wicked, and ſome are weak. This general diviſion runs through the whole race of mankind, of the multitudes deſigned to obey, and of the few deſigned to govern. It was this depravity of multitudes, as well as their mutual wants, which obliged men firſt to enter into ſocieties, to depart from their natural liberty, and to ſubject themſelves to government. It was this depravity of the few, (which is often the greater, becauſe born no better than other men, they are educated worſe) which obliged men firſt to ſubject government to conſtitution, that they might preſerve ſocial, when they gave up natural liberty, and not be oppreſſed by arbitrary will. Kings may have preceded lawgivers, for aught I know, or have poſſibly been the firſt lawgivers, and government by will have been eſtabliſhed before government by conſtitution. THESEUS might reign at Athens, and EURYTION at Sparta, long before SOLON gave laws to one, and LYCURGUS to the other of theſe cities. Kings had governed Rome, we know,

know, and conſuls had ſucceeded kings, long before the decemviri compiled a body of law; and the Saxons had their monarchs before EDGAR, tho the Saxon laws went under his name. Theſe, and a thouſand other inſtances of the ſame kind, will never ſerve to prove what my lord BACON would prove by them, "* that monarchies do not ſubſiſt, like other governments, "by a precedent law, or compact; that the original ſub-"miſſion to them was natural, like the obedience of a child "to his parents; and that allegiance to hereditary monarchs "is the work of the law of nature." But that which theſe examples prove very plainly is, that however men might ſubmit voluntarily in the primitive ſimplicity of early ages, or be ſubjected by conqueſt to a government without a conſtitution, yet they were never long in diſcovering that "† to live by one "man's will became the cauſe of all mens miſery:" and therefore they ſoon rejected the yoke, or made it ſit eaſy on their necks. They inſtituted commonwealths, or they limited monarchies: and here began that ſtruggle between the ſpirit of liberty and the ſpirit of dominion, which always hath ſubſiſted, and, that we may not flatter ourſelves nor others, muſt always ſubſiſt, except in thoſe inſtances, of which the moſt antient hiſtories furniſh ſo few, the reigns of a TITUS, or a TRAJAN; for it might look like flattery to quote the preſent moſt auſpicious reign.

To govern a ſociety of freemen by a conſtitution founded on the eternal rules of right reaſon, and directed to promote the happineſs of the whole, and of every individual, is the nobleſt prerogative which can belong to humanity; and if man may be ſaid, without prophaneneſs, to imitate God in any caſe, this is the caſe: but ſure I am he imitates the devil, who is ſo

* Argum. in the caſe of POSTNATI. † HOOKER's Eccleſ. Pol. l. 1. ſect. 10.

far

far from promoting the happineſs of others, that he makes his own happineſs to conſiſt in the miſery of others; who governs by no rule but that of his paſſions, whatever appearances he is forced ſometimes to put on, who endeavours to corrupt the innocent and to enſlave the free, whoſe buſineſs is to ſeduce or betray, whoſe pleaſure is to damn, and whoſe triumph is to torment. Odious and execrable as this character is, it is the character of every prince who makes uſe of his power to ſubvert, or even to weaken that conſtitution, which ought to be the rule of his government. When ſuch a prince fills a throne with ſuperior parts, liberty is in the utmoſt peril; nor does the danger diminiſh in proportion, if he happens to want them. Such men as we are now to ſpeak of, (friends to the government and enemies to the conſtitution) will be always at hand to ſupply his defects; for as they are the willing inſtruments of a wicked prince, they are the ready prompters of a weak one. They may ſink into the maſs of the people, and diſappear in a good and a wiſe reign, or work themſelves into power under falſe colors. "Sed genus immortale manet." Their race will continue as long as ambition and avarice prevail in the world, and there will be bad citizens as long as there are bad men. The good ought therefore to be always on their guard againſt them, and whatever diſguiſe they aſſume, whatever veils they caſt over their conduct, they will never be able to deceive thoſe long, who obſerve conſtantly the difference between conſtitution and government, and who have virtue enough to preſerve the cauſe of the former, how unprofitable ſoever it may be at all times, and how unpopular ſoever at ſome.-----But I ramble too long in generals. It is high time I ſhould come to thoſe particular meaſures, by which the men I have deſcribed are moſt likely to carry on their deſigns againſt our conſtitution; after which I ſhall ſay ſomething of the methods, by which alone their deſigns may be prevented,

or

or will be defeated, if a national union oppoſe itſelf by ſuch methods as theſe, in time, to them.

Now that I may do this the better, and make what I have to ſay the more ſenſibly felt, give me leave to ſuppoſe, tho I ſpeak of a remote time, and ſuch an one as we ought to hope will never come, that our national circumſtances will be juſt the ſame as they are now, and our conſtitution as far diſtant as it now is from that point of perfection, to which the revolution ought to have brought it, might have brought it, and hath given the nation a right to expect that it ſhould be brought. The completion of that glorious deliverance is ſtill imperfect, after five and forty years, notwithſtanding the hopes then given, the engagements then taken, and the opportunities that have ſince ariſen. How this hath happened, by what arts this juſtice to the conſtitution hath been hitherto evaded, ſometimes in favor of one government, and ſometimes in favor of another, might eaſily be ſhewn, and proved too, beyond contradiction. But I had rather exhort than reproach, and eſpecially at a time when a ſtrong tendency appears among men of all denominations to ſuch a national union, as will effectually obtain the complete ſettlement of our conſtitution, which hath been ſo long delayed, if it be honeſtly, prudently and vigorouſly improved.

It is certain then, that if ever ſuch men as call themſelves friends to the government, but are real enemies of the conſtitution, prevail, they will make it a capital point of their wicked policy to keep up a ſtanding army. Falſe appearances of reaſon for it will never be wanting, as long as there are pretenders to the crown; tho nothing can be more abſurd than to employ, in defence of liberty, an inſtrument ſo often employed to deſtroy it; tho nothing can be more abſurd than to maintain that any government ought to make uſe of the ſame expedient

pedient to ſupport itſelf, as another government, on the ruins of which this government ſtands, was ſubverted for uſing; tho nothing can be proved more manifeſtly by experience than theſe two propoſitions, that Britain is enabled, by her ſituation, to ſupport her government, when the bulk of her people are for it, without employing any means inconſiſtent with her conſtitution; and that the bulk of the people are not only always for the government, when the government ſupports the conſtitution, but are even hard and ſlow to be detached from it, when the government attacks or undermines the conſtitution, and when they are by conſequence both juſtified in reſiſting, and even obliged in conſcience to reſiſt the government.

I HAVE heard it argued lately, that pretenders abroad are a ſecurity at home, and that a government expoſed to their attacks, will never venture to attack the conſtitution. I have been told too, that theſe notions were entertained by ſome who drew many political conſequences from them at the revolution. But if any of thoſe perſons are ſtill alive, I perſuade myſelf that they have altered this opinion, ſince ſuch a ſituation will furniſh at all times pretences of danger; ſince pretences of danger to a government, whether real or imaginary, will be always urged with plauſibility, and generally with ſucceſs, for obtaining new powers, or for ſtraining old ones; and ſince whilſt thoſe who mean well to the government, are impoſed upon by thoſe who mean ill to the conſtitution, all true concern for the latter is loſt in a miſtaken zeal for the former, and the moſt important is ventured to ſave the leaſt important, when neither one nor the other would have been expoſed, if falſe alarms had not been raſhly and too implicitly taken, or if true alarms had not given unneceſſary ſtrength to the government, at the expence of weakening the conſtitution.

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NOTWITHSTANDING what hath been ſaid, I do not imagine that an army would be employed by theſe men, directly and at firſt, againſt the nation and national liberty. I am far from thinking that any men can ariſe in future times, capable of attempting, in this manner, what ſome men in our age, who call themſelves friends to the government, have been ſo weak and ſo imprudent as to avow in print, and publiſh to the nation. To deſtroy Britiſh liberty with an army of Britons, is not a meaſure ſo ſure of ſucceſs as ſome people may believe. To corrupt the parliament is a ſlower, but might prove a more effectual method; and two or three hundred mercenaries in the two houſes, if they could be liſted there, would be more fatal to the conſtitution, than ten times as many thouſands in red and in blue out of them. Parliaments are the true guardians of liberty. For this principally they were inſtituted; and this is the principal article of that great and noble truſt, which the collective body of the people of Britain repoſes in the repreſentative. But then no ſlavery can be ſo effectually brought and fixed upon us as parliamentary ſlavery. By the corruption of parliament, and the abſolute influence of a king, or his miniſter, on the two houſes, we return into that ſtate, to deliver or ſecure us from which parliaments were inſtituted, and are really governed by the arbitrary will of one man. Our whole conſtitution is at once diſſolved. Many ſecurities to liberty are provided, but the integrity which depends on the freedom and the independency of parliament, is the key-ſtone that keeps the whole together. If this be ſhaken, our conſtitution totters. If it be quite removed, our conſtitution falls into ruin. That noble fabric, the pride of Britain, the envy of her neighbours, raiſed by the labor of ſo many centuries, repaired at the expence of ſo many millions, and cemented by ſuch a profuſion of blood; that noble fabric,

I ſay, which was able to reſiſt the united efforts of ſo many races of giants, may be demoliſhed by a race of pigmies. The integrity of parliament is a kind of Palladium, a tutelary goddeſs, who protects our ſtate. When ſhe is once removed, we may become the prey of any enemies. No AGAMEMNON, no ACHILLES will be wanted to take our city. THERSITES himſelf will be ſufficient for ſuch a conqueſt. But I need not dwell any longer on this ſubject. There is no man, who thinks at all, can fail to ſee the ſeveral fatal conſequences, which will neceſſarily flow from this one ſource, whenever it ſhall be opened. If the reaſon of the thing does not ſtrike him enough, experience muſt. The ſingle reign of HENRY the eighth will ſerve to ſhew, that no tyranny can be more ſevere than that which is exerciſed by a concert with parliament; that arbitrary will may be made the ſole rule of government, even whilſt the names and forms of a free conſtitution are preſerved; that for a prince, or his miniſter, to become our tyrant, there is no need to aboliſh parliaments; there is no need that he who is maſter of one part of the legiſlature, ſhould endeavor to aboliſh the other two, when he can uſe, upon every occaſion, the united ſtrength of the whole; there is no need he ſhould be a tyrant in the groſs, when he can be ſo in detail, nor in name, when he can be ſo in effect; that for parliaments to eſtabliſh tyranny, there is no need therefore to repeal magna charta, or any other of the great ſupports of our liberty. It is enough, if they put themſelves corruptly and ſervilely under the influence of ſuch a prince, or ſuch a miniſter.----On the whole, I conclude, that in the poſſible caſe here ſuppoſed, the firſt and principal object will be to deſtroy the conſtitution, under pretence of preſerving the government, by corrupting our parliaments. I am the better founded in concluding that this may happen in ſome fu-

future age, by what we may obſerve in our own. There is ſurely but too much reaſon to ſuſpect that the enemies of our conſtitution may attempt hereafter to govern by corruption, when we hear and ſee the friends and advocates of our preſent moſt incorrupt miniſter harrangue and ſcribble in favor of corruption; when it is pleaded for and recommended, as a neceſſary expedient of government, by ſome men, of all ranks and orders; not only by profeſſed hirelings, who write that they may eat, but by men who have talked and written themſelves already out of their native obſcurity and penury, by affecting zeal in the cauſe of liberty: not only by ſuch as theſe, but by men whoſe birth, education and fortune aggravate their crime and their folly; by men, whom honor at leaſt ſhould reſtrain from favoring ſo diſhonorable a cauſe; and by men, whoſe peculiar obligations to preach up morality, ſhould reſtrain them, at leaſt, from being the preachers of an immorality, above all others, abominable in it's nature, and pernicious in it's effects.

These men are ready, I know, to tell us, that the influence they plead for is neceſſary to ſtrengthen the hands of thoſe who govern; that corruption ſerves to oil the wheels of government, and to render the adminiſtration more ſmooth and eaſy; and that it can never be of dangerous conſequence under the preſent father of our country.----Abſurd and wicked triflers! "According to them, our excellent conſtitution" (as one of your correſpondents hath obſerved extremely well) "is "no better than a jumble of incompatible powers, which "would ſeparate and fall to pieces of themſelves, unleſs re-"ſtrained and upheld by ſuch honorable methods as thoſe of "bribery and corruption." They would prove, "that the form "of our government is defective to a degree of ridiculouſneſs."

But the ridicule, as well as the iniquity, is their own. A good government can want no power, under the preſent conſtitution. A bad one may, and it is fit it ſhould. Popularity is the expedient of one, and will effectually ſupport it. Nothing but corruption can ſupport the other. If there was a real deficiency of power in the crown, it ought to be ſupplied, no doubt. The old whimſies of prerogative ſhould not be revived; but limitations ought to be taken off, or new powers to be given. The friends of liberty acknowledge that a balance of the powers, divided among the three parts of the legiſlature, is eſſential to our conſtitution, and neceſſary to ſupport it. The friends of liberty therefore would concur, at leaſt to a certain point, with the friends of the miniſtry; for the former are friends to order, and enemies to licence. For decency's ſake, therefore, let the debate be put on this iſſue. Let it be ſuch a debate as freemen may avow without bluſhing. To argue from this ſuppoſed deficiency of power in the crown, in favor of a ſcheme of government repugnant to all laws divine and human, is ſuch an inſtance of abandoned, villainous proſtitution, as the moſt corrupt ages never ſaw, and as will place the preſent age, with infamous pre-eminence, at the head of them, unleſs the nation do itſelf juſtice, and fix the brand on thoſe who ought alone to bear it-----Thus much for the iniquity of the practice pleaded for. As to the danger of it, let us agree that a prince of ſuch magnanimity and juſtice as our preſent monarch, can never be tempted by any ſordid motives to forget the recent obligation which he and his family have to the Britiſh nation, by whom they were made kings; nor to aim at greater power and wealth than are conſiſtent with the ſafety of the conſtitution they are entruſted to preſerve, and obliged to ſecure. Allowing this to be our preſent

ſent caſe, (and concerning our preſent caſe, there are not two opinions, I dare ſay, in the whole nation) yet ſtill the ſymptoms I have mentioned, ſhew that the poiſon, with which theſe pretended friends of the government, and real enemies of the conſtitution, corrupt the morals of mankind, hath made ſome progreſs; and if this progreſs be not immediately checked by proper antidotes, and the power of poiſoning taken from theſe empirics, the diſeaſe will grow incurable. The laſt diſmal effect of it may not, or if you pleaſe, cannot happen in this reign; but it may, nay it muſt happen in ſome other, unleſs we prevent it effectually and ſoon: and what ſeaſon more proper to prevent it in, and to complete the ſecurity of our liberties, than the reign of a prince, for whom the nation hath done ſo much, and from whom, by conſequence, the nation hath a right to expect ſo much? King WILLIAM delivered us from popery and ſlavery. There was wiſdom in his councils, and fortitude in his conduct. He ſteered thro many real difficulties at home, and he fought our battles abroad; and yet thoſe points of ſecurity, which had been neglected, or not ſufficiently provided for in the honey-moon of his acceſſion, were continually preſſed upon him, during the whole courſe of his reign. The men who preſſed them were called jacobites, tories, republicans, and incendiaries too; not from the throne indeed, but by the clamor of thoſe, who ſhewed great indifference at leaſt for the conſtitution, whilſt they affected great zeal for the government. They ſucceeded however in part, and we enjoy the benefit of their ſucceſs. If they did not ſucceed in the whole; if the ſettlement neceſſary to ſecure our liberty, and therefore intended at the revolution, be not yet complete, let us be perſuaded, and let us act on that perſuaſion, that the honor of completing it was reſerved to crown the glories

glories of the preſent reign. To finiſh the great work, which king WILLIAM began, of eſtabliſhing the liberties of Britain on firm and durable foundations, muſt be reputed an honor ſurely; and to whom can this honor belong more juſtly than to a prince, who emulates, in ſo remarkable a manner, all the other heroic virtues of his renowned predeceſſor?

I am, SIR, &c.

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LETTER XI.

SIR,

IF it was poſſible for any man, who hath the leaſt knowledge of our conſtitution, to doubt in good earneſt whether the preſervation of public freedom depends on the preſervation of parliamentary freedom, his doubts might be removed, and his opinion decided, one would imagine, by this ſingle, obvious remark, that all the deſigns of our princes againſt liberty, ſince parliaments began to be eſtabliſhed on the model ſtill ſubſiſting, have been directed conſtantly to one of theſe two points, either to obtain ſuch parliaments as they could govern, or elſe to ſtand all the difficulties, and to run all the hazards of governing without parliaments. The means principally employed to the firſt of theſe purpoſes, have been undue influences on the elections of members of the houſe of commons, and on theſe members when choſen. When ſuch influences could be employed ſucceſsfully, they have anſwered all the ends of arbitrary will; and when they could not be ſo employed, arbitrary will hath been forced to ſubmit to the conſtitution. This hath been the caſe, not only ſince, but before that great change in the balance of property, which began in the reigns of HENRY the ſeventh, and HENRY the eighth, and carried a great part of that weight into the ſcale of the commons, which had lain before in the ſcale of the peers and clergy.

IF we look back as far as the cloſe of the fourteenth century, an aera pretty near to that when parliaments received their preſent form, we ſhall find both theſe means employed by one of the worſt of our kings, RICHARD the ſecond. That he

he might obtain his will, which was raſh, he directed mandates to his ſheriffs, (officers of the crown, and appointed by the crown; for ſuch they were then, and ſuch they ſtill are) to return certain perſons nominated by himſelf: and thus he acquired an undue influence over the elections. In the next place, he obliged the perſons thus returned, ſometimes by threats and terror, and ſometimes by gifts, to conſent to thoſe things which were prejudicial to the realm: and thus he acquired an undue influence over the houſe of commons. So that, upon the whole, the arbitrary will of a raſh, headſtrong prince, and the ſuggeſtions of his wicked miniſters, guided the proceedings of parliament, and became the law of the land. I might purſue obſervations of the ſame kind through ſeveral ſucceeding reigns; but to avoid lengthening theſe letters, which are grown perhaps too long already, let us deſcend at once to the reign of king CHARLES the ſecond, for in that we ſhall find examples of all the means which a court that hath common ſenſe, and a prince who will not ſet his crown on the caſt of a dye, can take to undermine the foundations of liberty, either by governing parliaments, or by governing without them.

Now the firſt attempt of this kind, which king CHARLES made againſt the conſtitution, was this: he improved and managed the ſpirit of the firſt parliament he called, ſo as to render the two houſes obſequious to his will, almoſt in every caſe; and having got the triennial bill repealed, he kept the ſame parliament in being for many years by prorogations, which crept into cuſtom long before his time, but were ſtill a modern invention with reſpect to the primitive inſtitution of parliaments, and wholly repugnant to the antient practice. Thus he eſtabliſhed a ſtanding parliament, which is, in the nature of it, as dangerous as a ſtanding army, and may become, in

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ſome conjunctures, much more fatal to liberty. When the meaſures of his adminiſtration grew too bad, and the tendency of them too apparent to be defended and ſupported, even in that parliament, and even by a party-ſpirit, he had recourſe to a ſecond attempt, that is, to corruption; and CLIFFORD firſt liſted a mercenary band of friends to the government againſt the conſtitution.----Let us obſerve on this occaſion, and as we paſs along, that a national party, ſuch a party as the court adopts, in contradiſtinction to ſuch a party as it creates, will always retain ſome national principles, ſome regard to the conſtitution. They may be tranſported, or ſurpriſed, during the heat of conteſt eſpecially, into meaſures of long and fatal conſequence. They may be carried on, for a certain time and to a certain point, by the luſts of vengeance and of power, in order to wreak one upon their adverſaries, and to ſecure the other to themſelves. But a national party will never be the inſtruments of completing national ruin. They will become the adverſaries of their friends, and the friends of their adverſaries, to prevent it; and the miniſter who perſiſts in ſo villainous a project, by what name ſoever he may affect to diſtinguiſh himſelf and his followers, will be found really at the head of a faction, not of a party. But the difference between one and the other is ſo viſible, and the boundaries where party ceaſes and faction commences, are ſo ſtrongly marked, that it is ſufficient to point at them.

I RETURN therefore, and obſerve that when the ſpirit of party failed king CHARLES, and the corruption he employed proved ineffectual, he reſolved to govern for a time without parliaments, and to employ that time, as ſoon as he had checked the ſpirit of one party, by inflaming that of another, in garbling corporations. He had found by experience, that it was impoſſible to corrupt the ſtream in any great degree, as long

as the fountain continued pure. He applied himſelf therefore to ſpread the taint of the court in them, and to poiſon thoſe ſprings, from whence the health and vigor of the conſtitution flow. This was the third, the laſt, and by much the moſt dangerous expedient employed by the friends of the government, in the reign of king CHARLES the ſecond, to undermine our liberties. The effect of it he did not live to ſee, but we may eaſily conjecture what it would have been.

THE uſe I make of what hath been here ſaid is this: the deſign of the revolution being not only to ſave us from the immediate attempts on our religion and liberty, made by king JAMES, but to ſave us from all other attempts which had been made, or might be made, of the ſame tendency; to renew and ſtrengthen our conſtitution; "* to eſtabliſh the peace, "honor and happineſs of theſe nations upon laſting founda-"tions,---and to procure a ſettlement of the religion, and of "the liberties and properties of the ſubjects, upon ſo ſure a "foundation, that there might be no danger of the nation's "relapſing into the like miſeries at any time hereafter." This being, I ſay, the avowed deſign of the revolution, and the nation having engaged in it on a confidence that all this would be effectually performed, the deſign of the revolution was not accompliſhed, the benefit of it was not ſecured to us, the juſt expectations of the nation could not be anſwered, unleſs the freedom of elections, and the frequency, integrity and independency of parliaments were ſufficiently provided for. Theſe are the eſſentials of Britiſh liberty. Defects in other parts of the conſtitution can never be fatal, if theſe are preſerved intire. But defects in theſe will ſoon deſtroy the conſtitution, tho every other part of it ſhould be ſo preſerved. However it happened,

* See the prince of ORANGE's declaration.

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the truth and notoriety of the fact oblige us to ſay, that theſe important conditions, without which liberty can never be ſecure, were almoſt wholly neglected at the revolution. The claim of right declares, indeed, that "elections ought to "be free; that freedom of ſpeech and debates ought not to "be impeached or queſtioned out of parliament; and that "parliaments ought to be held frequently." But ſuch declarations, however ſolemnly made, are nothing better than pompous trifles, if they ſtand alone; productive of no good; and thus far productive of ill, that they ſerve to amuſe mankind in points of the greateſt importance, and wherein it concerns them the moſt nearly neither to be deceived, nor ſo much as amuſed. Theſe were rights, no doubt, to which the nation had an indiſputable claim. But then they ought to have been more than claimed, ſince they had been ſo often and ſo lately invaded. That they were not more than claimed, that they were not effectually aſſerted and ſecured, at this time, gave very great and immediate diſſatisfaction; and they who were called whigs in thoſe days, diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the loudneſs of their complaints. Thus, for inſtance, they inſiſted that there could be no "* real ſettlement; nay, that it "was a jeſt to talk of a ſettlement, till the manner and time "of calling parliaments, and their ſitting when called, were "fully determined:" and this in order to prevent the practice of "keeping one and the ſame parliament ſo long on foot, "till the majority was corrupted by offices, gifts and penſions." They inſiſted that the aſſurances given at the revolution had led them to think, that "†the antient, legal courſe of an-"nually choſen parliaments would have been immediately re-"ſtored;" and the particular circumſtances of king WILLIAM,

* See conſiderations concerning the ſtate of the nation, by Mr. HAMBDEN, publiſhed in 1692.

† An enquiry, or a diſcourſe, &c. publiſhed in 1693.

who had received the crown by gift of the people, and who had renewed the original contract with the people, which are preciſely the circumſtances of the preſent royal family, were urged as particular reaſons for the nation to expect his compliance.

THE frequent ſitting of parliament was indeed provided for, indirectly and in conſequence, by the exigencies of the war, which ſoon followed the revolution. This war made annual ſupplies neceſſary; and, before it was over, the ſame neceſſity of annual ſeſſions of parliament came to be eſtabliſhed, as it continues to this hour, by the great alteration made with relation to the public revenue. The whole public revenue had been the king's formerly. Parliamentary aids were, in thoſe days, extraordinary and occaſional; and things came to that paſs at laſt, that parliaments were more frequently, or more rarely convened, juſt as courts had more frequent or more rare occaſions for ſuch ſupplies. But king WILLIAM began to be, and all our princes ſince him have continued to be, only proprietors for life of that part of the public revenue, which is appropriated to their civil liſt; altho they are intruſted ſtill with the management of the whole, and are even the ſtewards of the public creditors for that part which is the private property of theſe creditors. This is the preſent ſtate, ſufficiently known, but neceſſary to be mentioned particularly on this occaſion: and this muſt continue to be the ſtate, unleſs ſome prince ſhould ariſe hereafter, who, being adviſed by a deſperate miniſter, abetted by a mercenary faction, ſupported by a ſtanding army, and inſtigated, like RICHARD the ſecond, by the "*raſhneſs of his own temper," may lay rapacious hands on all the funds that have been created, and by applying illegally what

* Per immoderatam voluntatem.

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he may raiſe legally, convert the whole to his own uſe, and ſo eſtabliſh arbitrary power, by depriving at one ſtroke many of his ſubjects of their property, and all of them of their liberty. Till this happens, (and heaven forbid that it ſhould be ever attempted!) ſeſſions of parliament muſt be annually held, or the government itſelf be diſtreſſed. But neither is this ſuch a direct and full ſecurity as the importance of the thing requires; nor does the ſecurity of our liberty conſiſt only in frequent ſeſſions of parliaments, but it conſiſts likewiſe in frequent new parliaments. Nay, it conſiſts ſo much more in this than in the other, that the former may tend without the latter, even more than the diſcontinuance of parliaments, to the loſs of liberty. This was foreſeen by the wiſdom of our conſtitution. According to that, altho it became in time, by the courſe of events, and inſenſible alterations, no longer neceſſary to call parliaments once, or even twice in a year, which had been the more antient practice, yet ſtill our kings continued under an incapacity of proceeding long in government, with any tolerable eaſe and ſafety to themſelves, without the concurrence and aſſiſtance of theſe aſſemblies. According to the ſame conſtitution, as parliaments were to be held, ſo they were to be choſen frequently; and the opinion, that the "holding and continuance of parliaments depended abſolutely on the will of "the prince," may be juſtly ranked amongſt thoſe attempts, that were made by ſome men to ſet the law, whilſt others endeavored to ſet the goſpel, on the ſide of arbitrary power. This is the plain intent and ſcheme of our conſtitution, which provides that the repreſentatives of the people ſhould have frequent opportunities to communicate together about national grievances; to complain of them, and to obtain the redreſs of them, in an orderly, ſolemn, legal manner; and that the people ſhould have frequent opportunities of calling their repreſentatives to account, as it were, for the diſcharge of the truſt

truſt committed to them, and of approving or diſapproving their conduct, by electing or not electing them anew. Thus our conſtitution ſuppoſes that princes may abuſe their power, and parliaments betray their truſt; and provides, as far as human wiſdom can provide, that neither one nor the other may be able to do ſo long, without a ſufficient control. If the crown, indeed, perſiſts in uſurping on the liberty of the people, or in any other kind of mal-adminiſtration; and if the prince who wears it proves deaf, as our princes have ſometimes been, to the voice of his parliament and his people, there remains no remedy in the ſyſtem of the conſtitution. The conſtitution is broken by the obſtinacy of the prince, and the "* people muſt appeal to heaven in this, as in all other caſes, "where they have no judge on earth." Thus if a parliament ſhould perſiſt in abetting mal-adminiſtration, or any way give up thoſe liberties which they were intruſted to maintain, no doubt can be made but that the people would be in the ſame caſe; ſince their repreſentatives have no more right to betray them, than their kings have to uſurp upon them: and by conſequence they would acquire the ſame right of appealing to heaven, if our conſtitution had not provided a remedy againſt this evil, which could not be provided againſt the other; but our conſtitution hath provided ſuch a remedy in the frequent ſucceſſion of new parliaments, by which there is not time ſufficient given, to form a majority of the repreſentatives of the people into a miniſterial cabal; or by which, if this ſhould happen, ſuch a cabal muſt be ſoon broken. Theſe reflections, and ſuch others as they naturally ſuggeſt, are ſufficient to convince any thinking man, firſt, that nothing could make it ſafe, nor therefore reaſonable, to repoſe in any ſet of men whatſoever, ſo great a truſt as the collective body delegates to

* Locke's Eſſay upon Government, chap. 14.

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the repreſentative in this kingdom, except the ſhortneſs of the term for which this truſt is delegated. Secondly, that every prolongation of this term is therefore, in it's degree, unſafe for the people; that it weakens their ſecurity, and endangers liberty by the very powers given for it's preſervation. Thirdly, that ſuch prolongations expoſe the nation, in the poſſible caſe of having a corrupt parliament, to loſe the great advantage which our conſtitution hath provided, of curing the evil, before it grows confirmed and deſperate, by the gentle method of chuſing a new repreſentative, and reduce the nation, by conſequence, to have no other alternative than that of ſubmitting or reſiſting; tho ſubmiſſion will be as grievous, and reſiſtance much more difficult, when the legiſlature betrays it's truſt, than when the king alone abuſes his power.----Theſe reflections, I ſay, are ſufficient to prove theſe propoſitions; and theſe propoſitions ſet before us, in a very ſtrong light, the neceſſity of uſing our utmoſt efforts that the true deſign of our conſtitution may be purſued as cloſely as poſſible, by the reeſtabliſhment of annual, or at leaſt of triennial parliaments. But the importance of the matter, and the particular ſeaſonableneſs of the conjuncture, invite me to offer one conſideration more upon this head, which I think will not ſtrike the leſs for being obvious and plain. It is this. Should a king obtain, for many years at once, the ſupplies and powers which uſed to be granted annually to him; this would be deemed, I preſume, even in the preſent age, an unjuſtifiable meaſure and an intolerable grievance, for this plain reaſon; becauſe it would alter our conſtitution in the fundamental article, that requires frequent aſſemblies of the whole legiſlature, in order to aſſiſt, and control too, the executive power which is intruſted with one part of it. Now I aſk, is not the article which requires frequent elections of the repreſentative, by the collective body of the people, in order to ſecure the latter againſt the ill conſequences

ſequences of the poſſible weakneſs or corruption of the former, as fundamental an article, and as eſſential to the preſervation of our liberties as the other? No man dares ſay that it is not; at leaſt, no man who deſerves our attention. The people of Britain have as good a right, and a right as neceſſary to be aſſerted, to keep their repreſentatives true to the truſt repoſed in them, and to the preſervation of the conſtitution, by the control of frequent elections, as they have to keep their kings true to the truſt repoſed in them, and to the preſervation of the conſtitution, by the control of frequent ſittings of parliament. How comes it then to paſs, that we may obſerve ſo great a difference in the ſentiments of mankind, about theſe two caſes? Propoſe the firſt, there is no ſervile friend of government, who will not affect all that horror at the propoſition, which every friend of the conſtitution will really feel. Propoſe the keeping up ſeptennial, nay, the making decennial parliaments, the ſame friends of government will contend ſtrenuouſly for one, and by conſequence for both; ſince there can be no reaſon alledged for the firſt, which is not ſtronger for the laſt, and would not be ſtill ſtronger for a longer term. Theſe reaſons, drawn from two or three common-place topics of pretended conveniency and expediency, or of ſuppoſed tranquility at home, and ſtrength abroad, I need not mention. They have been mentioned by others, and ſufficiently refuted. But that which may very juſtly appear marvellous, is this: that ſome men, I think not many, who are true friends of the conſtitution, have been ſtaggered in their opinions, and almoſt ſeduced by the falſe reaſonings of theſe friends of government; tho nothing can be more eaſy than to ſhew, from reaſon and experience, that convenience, expediency, and domeſtic tranquility may be, and in fact have been as well, nay, better ſecured under triennial, nay, annual parliaments, than under parliaments of a longer continuance; and as for ſtrength abroad,

abroad; that is, national credit and influence, it will depend on the opinion foreign nations have of our national diſpoſitions, and the unanimity of our ſentiments. It muſt be chiefly determined therefore by their knowledge of the real ſenſe of the nation. Now that can appear no way ſo much as in the natural ſtate of our conſtitution, by frequent elections; and when it does appear ſo, it muſt have another kind of effect than the bare reſolutions of a ſtale, miniſterial parliament; eſpecially if it happens, as it may happen in ſome future time, that the ſenſe of the nation ſhould appear to be different from the ſenſe of ſuch a parliament; and that the reſolutions of ſuch a parliament ſhould be avowedly dictated by men, odious and hated, contemptible and contemned both at home and abroad.

But in the ſuppoſition that ſome inconveniencies may ariſe by frequent elections, which is only allowed for argument's ſake, are ſuch inconveniencies, and the trifling conſequences of them, to be ſet in the balance againſt the danger of weakening any one barrier of our liberty? Every form of government hath advantages and diſadvantages peculiar to it. Thus abſolute monarchies ſeem moſt formed for ſudden and vigorous efforts of power, either in attacking or in defending, whilſt, in free conſtitutions, the forms of government muſt be neceſſarily more complicated and ſlow; ſo that in theſe, the ſame ſecrecy cannot be always kept, nor the ſame diſpatch always made, nor the ſame ſteadineſs of meaſures always purſued. Muſt all theſe forms, inſtituted to preſerve the checks and controls of the ſeveral parts of the conſtitution on one another, and neceſſary by conſequence to preſerve the liberty of the whole, be abandoned therefore, and a free conſtitution be deſtroyed, for the ſake of ſome little conveniency, or expediency the more, in the adminiſtration of public affairs? No certainly. We

muſt keep our free conſtitution, with the ſmall defects belonging to it, or we muſt change it for an arbitrary government, free perhaps from theſe defects, but liable to more and to worſe. In ſhort, we muſt make our option; and ſurely this option is not hard to be made, between the real and permanent bleſſings of liberty, diffuſed through a whole nation, and the fantaſtic and accidental advantages which they who govern, not the body of the people, enjoy under abſolute monarchies. I will not multiply inſtances, tho they croud in upon me.----Two conſuls were choſen annually at Rome, and the proconſular power in the government of provinces was limited to a year. Several inconveniencies aroſe, no doubt, from the ſtrict obſervation of this inſtitution. Some appear very plain in hiſtory: and we may aſſure ourſelves, that many arguments of conveniency, of expediency, of preſerving the tranquility of the city, and of giving ſtrength and weight to the arms and counſels of the commonwealth, were urged to prevail on the people to diſpenſe with theſe inſtitutions, in favor of POMPEY and of CAESAR. What was the conſequence? The pirates were extirpated, the price of corn was reduced, Spain was held in ſubjection, Gaul was conquered, the Germans were repulſed, Rome triumphed, her government flouriſhed; but her conſtitution was deſtroyed, her liberty was loſt.---The law of habeas corpus, that noble badge of liberty, which every ſubject of Britain wears, and by which he is diſtinguiſhed ſo eminently, not from the ſlaves alone, but even from the freemen of other countries; the law of habeas corpus, I ſay, may be attended perhaps with ſome little inconveniencies, in time of ſedition and rebellion.---The ſlow methods of giving money, and the ſtrict appropriations of it, when given, may be attended with ſome inconveniency likewiſe, in times of danger, and in great exigencies of the ſtate.----But who will plead for the repeal of the habeas corpus act; or who would not preſs for the revi-

revival of it, if it ſtood ſuſpended for an indefinite, or even a long term ?---Who will ſay that the practice of giving money without account, or paſſing votes of credit, by which the purſe of the people is taken out of the hands of thoſe whom the people truſted, and put into the hands of thoſe whom they neither did, nor would have truſted; who will ſay that ſuch a deviation from thoſe rules of parliament, which ought to be deemed ſacred and preſerved inviolate, may be eſtabliſhed, or ſhould not be oppoſed by all poſſible means, if it was eſtabliſhed ?

If all this be as clear as I imagine it is; if the objections to frequent elections of parliaments do not lie; or, ſuppoſing them to lie, if the danger on one ſide outweighs vaſtly the ſuppoſed inconveniency on the other; nay, if laws and inſtitutions, not more eſſential to the preſervation of liberty than this ancient and fundamental rule of our conſtitution, be maintained; and if all men are forced to agree, even they, who wiſh them perhaps aboliſhed, that they ought to be maintained, for the ſake of preſerving liberty; let me ask again, how comes it to paſs, that we obſerve ſo great a difference between the ſentiments and reaſonings of mankind about frequent ſeſſions of parliament, and frequent parliaments; about the caſe now before us, and all the others that have been mentioned ? The only manner, in which I can account for ſuch an inconſiſtency, is this. The ſight of the mind differs very much from the ſight of the body, and its operations are frequently the reverſe of the other. Objects at a diſtance appear to the former in their true magnitude, and diminiſh as they are brought nearer. The event, that created much aſtoniſhment, indignation, or terror in proſpect, creates leſs and leſs as it approaches, and by the time it happens, men have familiarized themſelves with it.----If the Romans had been told, in the days of Augustus,

that an emperor would ſucceed, in whoſe reign an horſe ſhould be made conſul, they would have been extremely ſurpriſed. I believe they were not ſo much ſurpriſed when the thing happened, when the horſe was conſul and CALIGULA emperor.----If it had been foretold to thoſe patriots at the revolution, who remembered long parliaments, who ſtill felt the ſmart of them, who ſtruggled hard for annual, and obtained with much difficulty, at the end of five or ſix years, triennial parliaments, that a time would come, when even the term of triennial parliaments would be deemed too ſhort, and a parliament choſen for three years, would chuſe itſelf for four more, and entail ſeptennial parliaments on the nation; that this would happen, and the fruits of their honeſt labors be loſt, in little more than twenty years; and that it would be brought about, whilſt our government continued on the foundations they had then ſo newly laid: if all this had been foretold at the time I mention, it would have appeared improbable and monſtrous to the friends of the revolution. Yet it hath happened; and in leſs than twenty years, it is grown, or is growing, familiar to us. The uniform zeal and complaiſance of our parliaments for the crown, leave little room to apprehend any attempt to govern without them, or to make them do in one ſeſſion the work of ſeven; tho this would be extremely convenient, no doubt, a great eaſe to future miniſters, and a great ſaving of expence and time to country gentlemen. But ſuppoſe, for I deſire it may be remembered that we reaſon hypothetically, ſuppoſe a parliament ſhould think fit to give, in the firſt ſeſſion, all the money, all the credit, and all the powers neceſſary for carrying on the government, during ſeven years; and then let thoſe perſons, who will be ſhocked at this ſuppoſition, and yet declare themſelves for ſeptennial parliaments, lay their hands on their hearts, and conſider whether ſuch an alteration of the conſtitution might not grow familiar

to

to them, and even gain their approbation. I think it would do ſo. I am ſure it might as reaſonably as the other. They would find the eaſe, in one caſe, of little attendance, as much as that of diſtant elections in the other. The arguments of conveniency, expediency, public tranquility, and ſtrength to the government, would be juſt as well applied; and if the miniſters ſhould, by miracle, make no very exorbitant ill uſe of ſuch a ſituation, I doubt whether he who ſhould plead for annual parliaments then, would be much better heard by the ſame perſons, than he who pleads for frequent elections of parliaments is now. But let not the lovers of liberty, the friends of our conſtitution, reaſon in this manner. Let them remember that danger commences when the breach is made, not when the attack is begun; that he who neglects to ſtop the leak as ſoon as it is diſcovered, in hopes to ſave his ſhip by pumping, when the water guſhes in with violence, deſerves to be drowned; and, to lay aſide figures of ſpeech, that our conſtitution is not, like the ſchemes of ſome politicians, a jumble of disjointed, incoherent whimſies, but a noble and wiſe ſyſtem, the eſſential parts of which are ſo proportioned, and ſo intimately connected, that a change in one begets a change in the whole; that the frequent elections of parliament are as much an eſſential part of this ſyſtem, as the frequent ſittings of parliament; that the work of the revolution is imperfect therefore, and our future ſecurity precarious, unleſs our antient conſtitution be reſtored, in this eſſential part; and that the reſtoration of it, in this part, is one of thoſe methods, by which alone the pernicious deſigns of ſuch men as we have mentioned in a former letter, if any ſuch ſhould be ever admitted into power, (enemies to the conſtitution, under the maſk of zeal for the government) may be defeated.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER XII.

SIR,

WE have obſerved already, that the conſtitution of the Britiſh government ſuppoſes our kings may abuſe their power, and our repreſentatives betray their truſt, and provides againſt both theſe contingencies, as well as human wiſdom can provide. Here let us obſerve, that the ſame conſtitution is very far from ſuppoſing the people will ever betray themſelves; and yet this caſe is poſſible, no doubt. We do not read, I think of more than * one nation, who refuſed liberty when it was offered to them; but we read of many, and have almoſt ſeen ſome, who loſt it through their own fault, by the plain and neceſſary conſequences of their own conduct, when they were in full poſſeſſion of it, and had the means of ſecuring it effectually in their power. A wiſe and brave people will neither be cozened, nor bullied out of their liberty; but a wiſe and brave people may ceaſe to be ſuch: they may degenerate; they may ſink into ſloth and luxury; they may reſign themſelves to a treacherous conduct; or abet the enemies of the conſtitution, under a notion of ſupporting the friends of the government: they may want the ſenſe to diſcern their danger in time, or the courage to reſiſt, when it ſtares them in the face. The TARQUINS were expelled, and Rome reſumed her liberty. CAESAR was murdered, and all his race extinct, but Rome remained in bondage. From whence this difference? † MACHIAVEL ſhall account for it. In the days of TARQUIN the people of Rome were not yet corrupted. In the days of CÆSAR

* The Cappadocians, vid. STRABO, lib. 12.——"Libertatem repudiaverunt, "ut quam ſibi dicerent intolerabilem."

† Diſcourſes, lib. 1. c. 17.

they

they were moſt corrupt. A free people may be ſometimes betrayed; but no people will betray themſelves, and ſacrifice their liberty, unleſs they fall into a ſtate of univerſal corruption: and when they are once fallen into ſuch a ſtate, they will be ſure to loſe what they deſerve no longer to enjoy. To what purpoſe therefore ſhould our conſtitution have ſuppoſed a caſe, in which no remedy can avail; a caſe which can never happen, till the ſpirit which formed this conſtitution firſt, and hath preſerved it ever ſince, ſhall be totally extinguiſhed; and till it becomes an ideal entity, like the UTOPIA, exiſting in the imagination, or memory, no where elſe? As all government began, ſo all government muſt end by the people; tyrannical governments by their virtue and courage, and even free governments by their vice and baſeneſs. Our conſtitution, indeed, makes it impoſſible to deſtroy liberty by any ſudden blaſt of popular fury, or by the treachery of a few; for tho the many cannot eaſily hurt, they may eaſily ſave themſelves. But if the many will concur with the few; if they will adviſedly and deliberately ſuffer their liberty to be taken away by thoſe to whom they delegate power to preſerve it; this no conſtitution can prevent. God would not ſupport even his own theocracy againſt the concurrent deſire of the children of Iſrael, but gave them a king in his anger. How then ſhould our human conſtitution of government ſupport itſelf againſt ſo univerſal a change, as we here ſuppoſe, in the temper and character of our people? It cannot be. We may give ourſelves a tyrant in our folly, if we pleaſe. But this can never happen till the whole nation falls into a ſtate of political reprobation. Then, and not till then, political damnation will be our lot.

LET us deſcend into a greater detail, in order to develope theſe reflections fully, and to puſh the conſequences of them home to ourſelves, and to our preſent ſtate. They deſerve our utmoſt

utmoſt attention, and are ſo far from being foreign to the ſubject of theſe eſſays upon parties, that they will terminate in the very point at which we began, and wind up the whole in one important leſſon.

To proceed then: I ſay, that if the people of this iſland ſhould ſuffer their liberties to be at any time raviſhed, or ſtolen from them, they would incur greater blame, and deſerve by conſequence leſs pity, than any enſlaved and oppreſſed people ever did. By how much true liberty; that is, liberty ſtated and aſcertained by law, in equal oppoſition to popular licence and arbitrary will, hath been more boldly aſſerted, more wiſely or more ſucceſsfully improved, and more firmly eſtabliſhed in this than in other countries, by ſo much the more heavy would our juſt condemnation prove in the caſe that is here ſuppoſed. The virtue of our anceſtors, to whom all theſe advantages are owing, would aggravate the guilt and the infamy of their degenerate poſterity. There have been ages of gold and of ſilver, of braſs and of iron, in our little world, as in the great world, tho not in the ſame order. In which of theſe ages we are at preſent, let others determine. This, at leaſt, is certain, that in all theſe ages Britain hath been the temple, as it were, of liberty. Whilſt her ſacred fires have been extinguiſhed in ſo many countries, here they have been religiouſly kept alive. Here ſhe hath her ſaints, her confeſſors, and a whole army of martyrs, and the gates of hell have not hitherto prevailed againſt her: ſo that if a fatal reverſe is to happen; if ſervility and ſervitude are to over-run the whole world, like injuſtice, and liberty is to retire from it, like ASTRAEA, our portion of the abandoned globe will have, at leaſt, the mournful honor, whenever it happens, of ſhewing her laſt, her parting ſteps.

THE

THE antient Britons are to us the Aborigines of our iſland. We diſcover little of them through the gloom of antiquity, and we ſee nothing beyond them. This however we know, they were freemen. CAESAR, who viſited them in an hoſtile manner, but did not conquer them, perhaps was [a] beaten by them; CAESAR, I ſay, beſtows very liberally the title of kings upon their chieftains, and the compilers of fabulous traditions deduce a ſeries of their monarchs from SAMOTHES, a cotemporary of NIMROD. But CAESAR affected to ſwell the account of his expedition with pompous names; and theſe writers, like thoſe whom [b] STRABO mentions, endeavored to recommend themſelves by publiſhing romances to an ignorant generation, inſtead of hiſtories. Theſe ſuppoſed monarchs were the [c] heads of little clans; "reguli, vel melioris notae "nobiles;" and if our iſland knew any authority of the kingly ſort in thoſe days, it was that of occaſional and temporary monarchs, elected in great exigencies, "[d] communi conſilio, "ſuffragiis multitudinis," like CASSIVELLAUNUS in Britain, or VERCINGETORIX in Gaul; for, in ſome caſes, examples taken from either of theſe people will conclude for both. The kings who ruled in Britain after the Romans abandoned the iſland, in the beginning of the fifth century, held their authority from the people, and governed under the control of national aſſemblies, as we have great reaſon to believe, and none to doubt. In ſhort, as far as we can look back, a lawleſs power, a government by will, never prevailed in Britain.

THE Saxons had kings, as well as the Britons. The manner in which they eſtabliſhed themſelves, and the long wars they waged for and againſt the Britons, led to and maintained monarchical rule amongſt them. But theſe kings were in their

[a] Territa quæſitis oſtendit terga Britannis. [b] Geog. lib. 11. [c] SEL. Anal. Anglo Brit. Lib. 2. cap. 3. CAM. [d] CAES. de Bell. Lib. 5. & 7.

firſt inſtitution, no doubt, ſuch as TACITUS deſcribes the German kings and princes to have been: * chiefs, who perſuaded, rather than commanded; and who were heard in the public aſſemblies of the nation, according as their age, their nobility, their military fame, or their eloquence gave them authority. How many doughty monarchs, in later and more polite ages, would have ſlept in cottages, and have worked in ſtalls, inſtead of inhabiting palaces, and being cuſhioned up in thrones, if this rule of government had continued in force?---But the Saxon kings grew into power in time; and among them, as among other nations, birth, inſtead of merit, became, for the ſake of order and tranquility, a title to the throne. However, tho theſe princes might command, and were no longer under the neceſſity of governing by perſuaſion, they were ſtill under that of governing to the ſatisfaction of the people. By what other expedient could they govern men, who were wiſe enough to preſerve and exerciſe the right of electing their civil magiſtrates and military officers, and the ſyſtem of whoſe government was upheld and carried on by a gradation of popular aſſemblies, from the inferior courts to the high court of parliament; for ſuch, or very near ſuch, was the Wittena-Gemote, in nature and effect, whenever the word parliament came into uſe?

THE firſt prince of the Norman race was an abſolute conqueror, in the opinion of ſome men; and I can readily agree that he aſſumed, in ſome caſes, the power of a tyrant. But ſuppoſing all this to be true in the utmoſt extent, that the friends of abſolute monarchy can deſire it ſhould be thought ſo, this, and this alone will reſult from it; unlimited or abſolute monarchy could never be eſtabliſhed in Britain; no, not even

* De ſitu mor. & pop. Germ. lib. 11.

by

by conqueſt. The rights of the people were ſoon re-aſſerted; the laws of the confeſſor were reſtored; and the third prince of this race, HENRY the firſt, covenanted in a ſolemn ſpeech to his people, for their aſſiſtance againſt his brother ROBERT and the Normans, by promiſing that ſacred charter, which was in other reigns ſo often and ſo ſolemnly confirmed, by engaging to maintain his ſubjects in * their antient liberties, to follow their advice, and to rule them in peace with prudence and mildneſs.

I NEED not deſcend into more particulars, to ſhew the perpetuity of free government in Britain. Few men, even in this age, are ſo ſhamefully unacquainted with the hiſtory of their country, as to be ignorant of the principal events and ſignal revolutions, which have happened ſince the Norman æra. One continued deſign againſt liberty hath been carried on by various methods, almoſt in every reign. In many, the ſtruggles have been violent and bloody. But liberty ſtill hath triumphed over force, over treachery, over corruption, and even under oppreſſion. The altars of tyranny have been demoliſhed as ſoon as raiſed; nay, even whilſt they were raiſing, and the prieſts of that idol have been hewed to pieces: ſo that I will affirm, without the leaſt apprehenſion of being diſproved, that our conſtitution is brought nearer than any other conſtitution ever was, to the moſt perfect idea of a free ſyſtem of government.---One obſervation only I will make, before I leave this head, and it is this. The titles of thoſe kings which were precarious, from circumſtances of times, and notions that prevailed, notwithſtanding the general acquieſcence of the nation to them, afforded ſo many opportunities to our anceſtors of better ſecuring, or improving liberty. They were not ſuch

* In antiquis veſtris libertatibus. Veſtris inclinando conſiliis. Conſulsius & mitius, more manſueti principis.——Vid. MAT. PAR.

bubbles as to alter, without mending the government; much leſs to make revolutions, and ſuffer by them. They were not ſuch bubbles as to raiſe princes to the throne, who had no pretence to ſit in it but their choice, purely to have the honor of bettering the condition of thoſe princes, without bettering their own in proportion.-----If what I have been ſaying appears a little too digreſſive from the main ſcope of this eſſay, I ſhall hope for indulgence from this conſideration, that the natural effect of ſuch reflections as I have made and ſuggeſted, muſt be to raiſe in our minds the honeſt ambition of emulating the virtue and courage of our forefathers, in the cauſe of liberty; and to inſpire a reaſonable fear, heightened by ſhame, of loſing what they preſerved and delivered down to us, through ſo many mixtures of different people, of Britons with Saxons, of both with Danes, of all three with Normans, through ſo many difficulties, ſo many dangers, ſo many revolutions, in the courſe of ſo many centuries.

THERE is another reaſon to be given, why the people of this iſland would be more inexcuſable than any other, if they loſt their liberty; and the opening and enforcing of this reaſon will bring us fully into our ſubject.

I SUPPOSED juſt now that our liberty might be raviſhed, or ſtolen from us; but I think that expreſſion muſt be retracted, ſince it will appear, upon due conſideration, that our liberty cannot be taken away by the force or fraud alone of thoſe who govern; it cannot be taken away, unleſs the people are themſelves accomplices; and they who are accomplices, cannot be ſaid to ſuffer by one or the other. Some nations have received the yoke of ſervitude with little or no ſtruggle; but if ever it is impoſed upon us, we muſt not only hold out our necks to receive it, we muſt help to put it on. Now, to be paſſive

paſſive in ſuch a caſe is ſhameful; but to be active, is ſupreme and unexampled infamy. In order to become ſlaves, we of this nation muſt be beforehand what other people have been rendered by a long courſe of ſervitude; we muſt become the moſt corrupt, moſt profligate, the moſt ſenſeleſs, the moſt ſervile nation of wretches, that ever diſgraced humanity: for a force ſufficient to raviſh liberty from us, ſuch as a great ſtanding army is in time of peace, cannot be continued, unleſs we continue it; nor can the means neceſſary to ſteal liberty from us, be long enough employed with effect, unleſs we give a ſanction to their iniquity, and call good evil, and evil good.

It may be ſaid, that even the friends of liberty have ſometimes different notions about it, and about the means of maintaining or promoting it; and therefore that even the Britiſh nation may poſſibly, ſome time or other, approve and concur in meaſures deſtructive of their liberty, without any intention to give it up, and much more without changing from the character which they have hitherto borne among the ſocieties of mankind, to that infamous character I have juſt now ſuppoſed. If this were true, it would only furniſh more reaſons to be always on our guard, to be jealous of every extraordinary demand, and to reject conſtantly every propoſition, tho never ſo ſpecious, that had a tendency to weaken the barriers of liberty, or to raiſe a ſtrength ſuperior to theirs. But I confeſs I do not think we can be led blindfold ſo far as the brink of the precipice. I know that all words, which are ſigns of complex ideas, furniſh matter of miſtake and cavil. We diſpute about juſtice, for inſtance, and fancy that we have different opinions about the ſame thing; whilſt, by ſome little difference in the compoſition of our ideas, it happens that we have only different opinions about different things, and ſhould be of the

ſame opinion about the ſame thing. But this, I preſume, cannot happen in the caſe before us. All diſputes about liberty in this country, and at this time, muſt be diſputes for and againſt the ſelf-ſame fixed and invariable ſet of ideas, whatever the diſputants on one ſide of the queſtion may pretend, in order to conceal what it is not yet very ſafe to avow. No diſputes can poſſibly ariſe from different conceptions of any thing ſo clearly ſtated, and ſo preciſely determined, as the fundamental principles are, on which our whole liberty reſts.

If liberty be that delicious and wholſome fruit, on which the Britiſh nation hath fed for ſo many ages, and to which we owe our riches, our ſtrength, and all the advantages we boaſt of; the Britiſh conſtitution is the tree that bears this fruit, and will continue to bear it, as long as we are careful to fence it in, and trench it round, againſt the beaſts of the field, and the inſects of the earth. To ſpeak without a figure, our conſtitution is a ſyſtem of government ſuited to the genius of our nation, and even to our ſituation. The experience of many hundred years hath ſhewn, that by preſerving this conſtitution inviolate, or by drawing it back to the principles on which it was originally founded, whenever it ſhall be made to ſwerve from them, we may ſecure to ourſelves, and to our lateſt poſterity, the poſſeſſion of that liberty which we have long enjoyed. What would we more? What other liberty than this do we ſeek? And if we ſeek no other, is not this marked out in ſuch characters as he that runs may read? As our conſtitution therefore ought to be, what it ſeldom is, the rule of government, ſo let us make the conformity, or repugnancy of things to this conſtitution, the rule by which we accept them as favorable, or reject them as dangerous to liberty. They who talk of liberty in Britain on any other principles than thoſe of the Britiſh conſtitution, talk impertinently at beſt, and much

much charity is requiſite to believe no worſe of them. But they who diſtinguiſh between practicable and impracticable liberty, in order to inſinuate what they mean, or they mean nothing, that the liberty eſtabliſhed by the true ſcheme of our conſtitution is of the impracticable kind; and they who endeavor, both in ſpeculation and practice, to elude and pervert the forms, and to ridicule and explode the ſpirit of this conſtitution: theſe men are enemies, open and avowed enemies to it, and by conſequence to Britiſh liberty, which cannot be ſupported on any other bottom.----Some men there are, the peſts of ſociety I think them, who pretend a great regard to religion in general, but who take every opportunity of declaiming publicly againſt that ſyſtem of religion, or at leaſt againſt that church-eſtabliſhment, which is received in Britain. Juſt ſo the men of whom I have been ſpeaking, affect a great regard to liberty in general, but they diſlike ſo much the ſyſtem of liberty eſtabliſhed in Britain, that they are inceſſant in their endeavors to puzzle the plaineſt thing in the world, and to refine and diſtinguiſh away the life and ſtrength of our conſtitution, in favor of the little, preſent, momentary turns, which they are retained to ſerve. What now would be the conſequence, if all theſe endeavors ſhould ſucceed? I am perſuaded that the great philoſophers, divines, lawyers, and politicians, who exert them, have not yet prepared and agreed upon the plans of a new religion, and of new conſtitutions in church and ſtate. We ſhould find ourſelves therefore without any form of religion or civil government. The firſt ſet of theſe miſſionaries would take off all the reſtraints of religion from the governed, and the latter ſet would remove, or render ineffectual, all the limitations and controls, which liberty hath preſcribed to thoſe that govern, and diſjoint the whole frame of our conſtitution. Entire diſſolution of manners, confuſion, anarchy, or perhaps abſolute monarchy, would follow; for it

is poſſible, nay probable, that in ſuch a ſtate as this, and amidſt ſuch a rout of lawleſs ſavages, men would chuſe this government, abſurd as it is, rather than have no government at all.

But here again it may be ſaid, that as liberty is a word of uncertain ſignification, ſo is conſtitution; that men have taught the moſt oppoſite doctrines, and pretended at leaſt to build them on the principles of the conſtitution; that the rule therefore of determining our notions of liberty by the principles of our conſtitution, is no rule, and we are by conſequence juſt where we were before. But the anſwer is ready. It is true that there were formerly men who perſiſted long in the attempt to talk and write that chimera called prerogative into vogue; to contend that it was ſomething real, a right inherent in the crown, founded in the conſtitution of our government; and equally neceſſary to ſupport the juſt authority of the prince, and to protect the ſubject. How we had like to have loſt our liberty by the prevalence of ſuch doctrines, by the conſequences drawn from them, and the practices built upon them, hath been touched in the deduction of the ſtate of parties. But happily this kind of progreſſion from a free to a ſlaviſh conſtitution of government, was ſtopped at the revolution, and the notions themſelves are ſo exploded in the courſe of ſix and forty years, that they are entertained at this hour by no ſet of men, whoſe numbers or importance give them any pretence to be reckoned among our national parties.----It is as true, that there are now men who purſue the very ſame deſign by different methods. The former attacked, theſe undermine our liberty. The former were the beaſts of the field hinted at above; theſe are the inſects of the earth; and like other inſects, tho ſprung from dirt, and the vileſt of the animal kind, they can nibble, and gnaw, and poiſon; and, if they

they are ſuffered to multiply and work on, they can lay the moſt fruitful country waſte. Corruption and dependency are their favorite topics. They plead for the firſt as a laudable expedient of government; and for the laſt, I mean corrupt, private dependency, as an eſſential part of our conſtitution. When they have perplexed, as much as they are able, our ideas of dependency and independency, they reaſon, if I may give their ſophiſms ſo good a name, as if the independency of each part of the legiſlature, of the king particularly, aroſe from the dependency of the other parts on that part. Now this is both falſe and abſurd.---It is falſe, becauſe the conſtitutional independency of each part of the legiſlature ariſes from hence, that diſtinct rights, powers and privileges are aſſigned to it by the conſtitution. But then this independency of one part can be ſo little ſaid to ariſe from the dependency of another, that it conſiſts properly and truly in the free, unbiaſſed, uninfluenced and independent exerciſe of theſe rights, powers and privileges, by each part, in as ample an extent as the conſtitution allows, or, in other words, as far as that point, where the conſtitution ſtops this free exerciſe, and ſubmits the proceedings of one part, not to the private influence, but to the public control of the other parts. Before this point, the independency of each part is meant by the conſtitution to be abſolute. From this point, the conſtitutional dependency of each part on the others commences. To talk of natural independency belonging to the kingly office, to an houſe of peers, or an houſe of commons, the inſtitutions of art, not of nature, is impertinent.---It is abſurd, becauſe it abſolutely deſtroys the very thing it is advanced to eſtabliſh; for if A's independency ariſes from the dependency of B, and B's independency from the dependency of A, then are A and B both dependent, and there is no ſuch thing as conſtitutional independency at all. The crown is the ſource of honors, and hath the diſpoſal of

public employments. This no man diſputes; nor would any man, I believe, go about to alter. But will it follow that the * conſtitutional independency of the king would be loſt, becauſe the houſe of commons give the ſupplies, if he had not the power of giving part of this money, in places and penſions, back again to the members of that houſe? It would be eaſy for me to turn this whole profound reaſoning into many, even ridiculous lights; but the ſubject creates other ſentiments than thoſe of mirth, tho the logic employed about it deſerves a ludicrous, not a ſerious treatment.----I aſk pardon for having ſaid ſo much upon ſo ſlight an occaſion, and I proceed.

NOTWITHSTANDING all theſe endeavors to puzzle our conſtitution, formerly in favor of that prerogative, by the weight of which it muſt have been cruſhed, and actually at this time in favor of that corruption and corrupt dependency by which it would be ſoon demoliſhed; the main principles of the Britiſh conſtitution are ſimple and obvious, and fixed, as well as any truths can be fixed, in the minds of men, by the moſt determinate ideas. The ſtate of our conſtitution then affords an eaſy and unerring rule, by which to judge of the ſtate of our liberty. The improvement or decay of one, denotes the improvement or decay of the other; and the ſtrength or weakneſs of one, the ſafety or danger of the other. We cannot loſe our liberty, unleſs we loſe our conſtitution; nor loſe our conſtitution, unleſs we are accomplices to the violations of it; for this conſtitution is better fitted than any, antient or modern, ever was, not only to preſerve liberty, but to provide for it's own duration, and to become immortal, if any thing human could be ſo.

I am, SIR, &c.

* Vide London Jour. Sept. 28, 1734.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

SIR,

MUCH hath been ſaid occaſionally, in the courſe of theſe letters, concerning the beauty and excellency of the Britiſh conſtitution. I ſhall make, however, no excuſe for returning to the ſame ſubject, upon an occaſion which introduces it ſo naturally, and indeed ſo neceſſarily. Nothing can be more appoſite to the profeſſed deſign of theſe writings; nothing of more real, and more preſent uſe. Let me ſpeak plainly. We have been all of us, thoſe of every ſide, and of every denomination, accuſtomed too long to value ourſelves, fooliſhly or knaviſhly, on our zeal for this or that party, or for this or that government; and to make a merit of ſtraining the conſtitution different ways, in order to ſerve the different purpoſes of each. It is high time we ſhould all learn, if that be ſtill poſſible, to value ourſelves in the firſt place on our zeal for the conſtitution; to make all governments, and much more all parties, bow to that, and to ſuffer that to bow to none. But how ſhall this conſtitution be known, unleſs we make it the ſubject of careful enquiry, and of frequent and ſober reflection? Or unknown, how ſhall it become, what it ought to be, the object of our admiration, our love and our zeal? Many of thoſe who reap the greateſt advantages from it, paſs it by unregarded, with equal folly and ingratitude. Many take a tranſient, inattentive view of it. Many again conſider it in part only, or behold it in a narrow, pedantic light. Inſtead of this, we ſhould view it often. We ſhould pierce through the form to the ſoul of it. We ſhould contemplate the noble object in all its parts, and in the whole, and render it as familiar to our intellectual ſight, as the moſt common ſenſible

ſible objects are to our corporeal ſight. " * Quam illa arden-
" tes amores exitaret ſui, ſi videretur?" Well may it be allowed me to apply to ſo glorious an effort of human wiſdom, what TULLY ſays after PLATO, in the PHAEDRUS, if I miſtake not, of wiſdom herſelf.

" ALL public regiment, ſays Mr. HOOKER, hath ariſen
" from deliberate advice, conſultation and compoſition be-
" tween men." The propoſition is undoubtedly and univerſally true. It is as true in the kingdom of Morocco, as it is in the kingdom of Britain; and the undeniable conſequences which flow from it are obvious. We are not to wonder, however, if men do not look up to this original of government, nor trace theſe conſequences from it in moſt countries. In the inſtitution of governments, too great powers have been uſually given, and too great confidence repoſed, either at firſt, or in proceſs of time. Theſe powers have ſubſiſted, have been confirmed by more time, and increaſed by the very nature of power, which is the propereſt inſtrument of it's own propagation. But the original compoſition, for want of being expreſſed, or ſufficiently implied, or frequently recurred to by the forms of the government, hath been forgot, or hath grown ſo obſolete, that they whoſe intereſt required that no ſuch thing ſhould be believed, have thought themſelves at liberty boldly to deny it; and not only ſo, but to ſuppoſe ſome other original of government. Strange ſyſtems of policy, and ſtranger of religion, have been deviſed to ſupport and ſanctify theſe uſurpations. Education hath been ſet on the ſame ſide; and ſaucy authority hath prevailed againſt the cleareſt light of nature, and the plaineſt dictates of common ſenſe. No man who hath read and looked abroad into the world, and made a reaſonable uſe of either, will think this too ſtrange to be true;

* CIC. de finib. l. 2.

ſince

ſince there is no demonſtrated truth (ſuch truths I mean as are here ſpoken of) which may not be rendered, at leaſt, very problematical, by long, uniform, poſitive contradiction; nor any demonſtrated lie, which may not be rendered probable to many, and certain to ſome, by a long, uniform, poſitive affirmation; according to a juſt obſervation made by father PAUL ſomewhere or other, on occaſion of CONSTANTINE's ſuppoſed grant, and other cheats of the court of Rome. But we of this country have been more happy. Our original contract hath been recurred to often, and as many cavils as have been made, as many jeſts as have been broke about this expreſſion, we might ſafely defy the aſſertors of abſolute monarchy and arbitrary will, if there were any worth our regard, to produce any one point of time, ſince which we know any thing of our conſtitution, wherein the whole ſcheme of it would not have been one monſtrous abſurdity, unleſs an original contract had been ſuppoſed. They muſt have been blinded therefore by ignorance, or paſſion, or prejudice, who did not always ſee that there is ſuch a thing neceſſarily, and in the very nature of our conſtitution; and that they might as well doubt whether the foundations of an antient, ſolid building were ſuited and proportioned to the elevation and form of it, as whether our conſtitution was eſtabliſhed by compoſition and contract. Sure I am that they muſt be worſe than blind, if any ſuch there are, who do not confeſs at this time, and under the preſent ſettlement, that our conſtitution is in the ſtricteſt ſenſe a bargain, a conditional contract between the prince and the people, as it always hath been, and ſtill is, between the repreſentative and collective bodies of the nation.

THAT this bargain may not be broken, on the part of the prince with the people, (tho the executive power be truſted to the prince, to be exerciſed according to ſuch rules, and by the mini-

miniſtry of ſuch officers as are preſcribed by the laws and cuſtoms of this kingdom) the legiſlative, or ſupreme power, is veſted by our conſtitution in three eſtates, whereof the king is one. Whilſt the members of the other two preſerve their private independency, and thoſe eſtates are conſequently under no dependency, except that which is in the ſcheme of our conſtitution, this control on the firſt will always be ſufficient; and a bad king, let him be as bold as he may pleaſe to be thought, muſt ſtand in awe of an honeſt parliament.

That this bargain may not be broken, on the part of the repreſentative body, with the collective body of the nation, it is not only a principal, declared right of the people of Britain, that the election of members to ſit in parliament ſhall be free, but it hath been a principal part of the care and attention of parliaments, for more than three hundred years, to watch over this freedom, and to ſecure it, by removing all influence of the crown, and all other corrupt influence, from theſe elections. This care and this attention have gone ſtill farther. They have provided, as far as they have been ſuffered to provide hitherto, by the conſtitutional dependency of one houſe on the other, and of both on the crown, that all ſuch influence ſhould be removed from the members after they are choſen. Even here the providence of our conſtitution hath not ſtopped. Leſt all other proviſions ſhould be ineffectual to keep the members of the houſe of commons out of this unconſtitutional dependency, which ſome men preſume, with a ſilly dogmatical air of triumph, to ſuppoſe neceſſary to ſupport the conſtitutional independency of the crown, the wiſdom of our conſtitution hath thought fit that the repreſentatives of the people ſhould not have time to forget that they are ſuch; that they are empowered to act for the people, not againſt them. In a word, our conſtitution means, that the members of this body ſhould

ſhould be kept, as it were, to their good behavior, by the frequent returns of new elections. It does all that a conſtitution can do, all that can be done by legal proviſions, to ſecure the intereſts of the people, by maintaining the integrity of their truſtees: and leſt all this ſhould fail, it gives frequent opportunities to the people to ſecure their intereſts themſelves, by mending their choice of their truſtees; ſo that as a bad king muſt ſtand in awe of an honeſt parliament, a corrupt houſe of commons muſt ſtand in awe of an honeſt people.

Between theſe two eſtates, or branches of the legiſlative power, there ſtands a third, the houſe of peers; which may ſeem in theory, perhaps, too much under the influence of the crown, to be a proper control upon it, becauſe the ſole right of creating peers reſides in the crown; whereas the crown hath no right to intermeddle in the electing commoners. This would be the caſe, and an intolerable one indeed, if the crown ſhould exerciſe this right often, as it had been exerciſed ſometimes with univerſal and moſt juſt diſapprobation. It is poſſible too that this may come to be the caſe, in ſome future age, by the method of electing peers to ſit in parliament, for one part of the ſame kingdom, by the frequent tranſlations of biſhops, and by other means, if the wiſdom and virtue of the preſent age, and the favorable opportunity of the preſent auſpicious and indulgent reign do not prevent it. But in all other reſpects, the perſons who are once created peers, and their poſterity, according to the ſcheme of the conſtitution, having a right to ſit and debate, and vote in the houſe of peers, which cannot be taken from them, except by forfeiture; all influence of the kind I have mentioned ſeems to be again removed, and their ſhare in the government depending neither on the king nor the people, they conſtitute a middle order,

and are properly mediators between the other two, in the eye of our conſtitution.

It is by this mixture of monarchical, ariſtocratical and democratical power, blended together in one ſyſtem, and by theſe three eſtates balancing one another, that our free conſtitution of government hath been preſerved ſo long inviolate, or hath been brought back, after having ſuffered violations, to its original principles, and been renewed, and improved too, by frequent and ſalutary revolutions. It is by this that weak and wicked princes have been oppoſed, reſtrained, reformed, puniſhed by parliaments; that the real, and perhaps the doubtful, exorbitancies of parliaments have been reduced by the crown, and that the heat of one houſe hath been moderated, or the ſpirit raiſed, by the proceedings of the other. Parliaments have had a good effect on the people, by keeping them quiet; and the people on parliaments, by keeping them within bounds, which they were tempted to tranſgreſs. A juſt confidence in the ſafe, regular, parliamentary methods of redreſſing grievances hath often made the freeſt, and not the moſt patient people on earth, bear the greateſt grievances much longer than people held under ſtronger reſtraints, and more uſed to oppreſſion, who had not the ſame confidence, nor the ſame expectation, have borne even leſs. The cries of the people, and the terror of approaching elections, have defeated the moſt dangerous projects for beggaring and enſlaving the nation; and the majority without doors hath obliged the majority within doors to truckle to the minority. In a word, two things may be ſaid with truth of our conſtitution, which I think neither can, nor ever could be ſaid of any other. It ſecures ſociety againſt the miſeries which are inſeparable from ſimple forms of government, and is liable as little as poſſible to the inconveniencies that ariſe in mixed forms. It cannot become

come uneaſy to the prince, or people, unleſs the former be egregiouſly weak or wicked; nor be deſtroyed, unleſs the latter be exceſſively and univerſally corrupt.----But theſe general aſſertions require to be a little better explained.

By ſimple forms of government, I mean ſuch as lodge the whole ſupreme power, abſolutely and without control, either in a ſingle perſon, or in the principal perſons of the community, or in the whole body of the people. Such governments are governments of arbitrary will, and therefore of all imaginable abſurdities the moſt abſurd. They ſtand in direct oppoſition to the ſole motive of ſubmiſſion to any government whatſoever; for if men quit the ſtate, and renounce the rights of nature, (one of which is, to be ſure, that of being governed by their own will) they do this, that they may not remain expoſed to the arbitrary will of other men, the weakeſt to that of the ſtrongeſt, the few to that of the many. Now, in ſubmitting to any ſimple form of government whatever, they eſtabliſh what they mean to avoid, and for fear of being expoſed to arbitrary will ſometimes, they chuſe to be governed by it always. Theſe governments do not only degenerate into tyranny, they are tyranny in their very inſtitution; and they who ſubmit to them are ſlaves, not ſubjects, however the ſupreme power may be exerciſed: for tyranny and ſlavery do not ſo properly conſiſt in the ſtripes that are given and received, as in the power of giving them at pleaſure, and the neceſſity of receiving them, whenever and for whatever they are inflicted. Abſolute democracy may appear to ſome, in abſtracted ſpeculation, a leſs deviation from nature than monarchy, and more agreeable to reaſon, becauſe here it is the will of the whole community, that governs the whole community, and becauſe reaſon does certainly inſtruct every man, even from a

conſciouſneſs of his own frailty, the impotentia animi of the Latin writers, to truſt as little power as poſſible to any other man. But ſtill it muſt be confeſſed, that if it be unſafe for a people to truſt too much power to a prince, it is unſafe for them likewiſe to keep too much power to themſelves. Abſolute monarchy is tyranny; but abſolute democracy is tyranny and anarchy both. If ariſtocracy be placed between theſe two extremes, it is placed on a ſlippery ridge, and muſt fall into one or the other, according to the natural courſe of human affairs; if the few who govern are united, into tyranny, perhaps, more ſevere than any other; if they are diſunited, into factions and diſorders as great as thoſe of the moſt tumultuous democracy.

From ſuch obſervations, and many of the ſame kind and tendency, it hath been concluded very reaſonably, that the beſt form of government muſt be one compounded of theſe three, and in which they are all ſo tempered, that each may produce the good effects, and be reſtrained by the counterworkings of the other two, from producing the bad effects that are natural to it. Thus much is evident. But then how to fix that juſt proportion of each, how to hit that happy temperament of them all in one ſyſtem, is a difficulty that hath perplexed the wiſeſt politicians, and the moſt famous legiſlators. Let me quote one of the greateſt writers of antiquity. * Tacitus acknowledges, in the fourth book of his annals, what is here advanced; but he thinks ſuch a conſtitution of government rather a ſubject of fine ſpeculation than of practice. He thinks it much more likely that ſuch a ſyſtem

* Cunctas nationes & urbes populus, aut primores, aut ſinguli regunt. Delecta ex his & conſtituta reipublicæ forma, laudari facilius quàm evenire; vel, ſi evenit, haud diuturna eſſe poteſt.

ſhould

ſhould continue to be admired and praiſed in idea, than eſtabliſhed in fact; and if it happens ever to be eſtabliſhed, he does not imagine it can be ſupported long. Not only the real difficulties which his ſagacity preſented to his mind, but his reflections on the conſtitution and fate of the Roman commonwealth might lead TACITUS into this deſpondency. But what the refinements of Roman policy could not do, hath been done in this iſland, upon foundations laid by the rough ſimplicity of our northern anceſtors.

IT would be a curious and entertaining amuſement, to reduce the conſtitutions of the Roman government, and of thoſe which were formed on the ruins of that empire, particularly of our own, to their firſt principles; to obſerve in which they agree, and in which they differ, and the uniform or various tendencies of each; to mark the latent, as well as apparent cauſes of their riſe and fall; how well or how ill they were contrived for triumphs abroad, or peace at home; for vain grandeur, or real proſperity; for reſiſting corruption, or being ruined by it. Such an analyſis and enquiry would be, I imagine, not only amuſing but uſeful. At leaſt, it would be more ſo than any rhapſody of general reflections, huddled together with little order or deſign; for theſe leave no ſyſtematical impreſſions on the mind; nothing but a confuſion of ideas, often bright and glittering, ſeldom inſtructive. But a work of this kind would be too voluminous and too aſpiring for theſe little eſſays, and the humble author of them. He will therefore keep to his point, and content himſelf to make ſome of thoſe obſervations alone, which ſeem proper to illuſtrate and prove what he hath advanced, that the Britiſh conſtitution is a plain and ſufficient rule of judgment and conduct to us in every thing that regards our liberty; for preſerving of

which, as well as for ſecuring its own duration, it is better fitted than any other.

THERE was ſo great a mixture of monarchical power in the Roman commonwealth, that * LIVY dates the original of liberty from the expulſion of the Tarquins, rather becauſe the conſular dignity was made annual, than becauſe the regal power had ſuffered any diminution in that change. The dictatorial power, the moſt abſolute that can be imagined, was introduced in eight, or at fartheſt in eleven years afterwards, and may therefore be reckoned coaeval with the commonwealth; and whatever diminution either this or the conſular power might ſuffer, the axes and the rods were terrible to the laſt, eſpecially when they were carried before a dictator, for whom the tribunes of the people were not a match, as they were for the conſuls. But tho there were three ſorts of power exerciſed, there were but two orders, or eſtates eſtabliſhed in this commonwealth, the patricians and the plebeians; and the ſupreme power was divided accordingly between the ſenate and the collective, not a repreſentative, body of the people. Theſe two orders or eſtates had frequent conteſts, and well they might, ſince they had very oppoſite intereſts. † Agrarian laws, for inſtance, began to be promulgated within three and twenty years, and continued to the end of the commonwealth to produce the ſame diſorders. How inconſiſtent, indeed, was that plan of government, which required ſo much hard ſervice of the people; and which, leaving them ſo much power in the

* Libertatis originem inde magis, quia annuum imperium conſulare factum eſt, quam quod diminutum quicquam ſit ex regiâ poteſtate, numeres. Omnia jura, omnia inſignia primi conſules tenuere. Lib. cap. 1.

† Tum primum lex agraria promulgata eſt; nunquam deinde uſque ad hanc memoriam ſine maximis motibus rerum agitata. Liv. l. 2. c. 41.

diſtribution

diſtribution of power, left them ſo little property in the diſtribution of property? Such an inequality of property, and of the means of acquiring it, cannot ſubſiſt in an equal commonwealth; and I much apprehend that any near approaches to a monopoly of property, would not be long endured even in a monarchy.----But I return to my firſt obſervation.

THO the Romans made frequent experience of the cruel miſchiefs, and even extreme danger to liberty, which attended almoſt every variance of the two eſtates, yet did they never fall upon any ſafe or effectual method of preventing theſe diſputes, or of reconciling them without violence. The old expedients alone ſubſiſted; and ſurely they were not only violent, but extra-conſtitutional. When the ſenate was inflexible, the people had immediate recourſe to ſedition. When the people was refractory, the ſenate had recourſe to a dictator. The latter had an approbation which could not be given to the former, and was a legal inſtitution; notwithſtanding which I make no ſcruple of ſaying that it was at leaſt as inconſiſtent with a free conſtitution of government as the former. Sedition was temporary anarchy. A dictator was a tyrant for ſix months, unleſs he thought fit to abdicate ſooner. The conſtitution was ſuſpended, and endangered by both. It might have been deſtroyed by the exceſſes of one. It was deſtroyed by the bare duration of the other. If the Romans had annually elected out of their tribes a certain number of men to repreſent the people inſtead of depending on their tribunes; (a ſort of bullying magiſtracy, and often a very corrupt one) and if this repreſentative body had been one eſtate, and had acted as ſuch, the conſuls might very well have ſupplied the place of a third eſtate, and have been ſafely truſted, even more independently of the ſenate than they were, with the

executive power. But the want of a third eſtate in the Roman ſyſtem of government, and of a repreſentative body, to act for the collective body, maintained one perpetual ferment, which often increaſed into a ſtorm, but never ſubſided into a calm. The ſtate of Rome, and of the greateſt men in that commonwealth, would have deſerved pity rather than envy, even in the beſt times, if their defective conſtitution had not made ſuch a ſtate of * trouble and tumult the price they paid for the maintenance of their liberty. But this was not the whole price. Whilſt Rome advanced triumphantly in conquering the world, as her orators, poets and hiſtorians have expreſſed themſelves; that is, a few nations round the Mediterranean ſea, and little more; her citizens turned againſt one another thoſe weapons, which were put into their hands againſt the enemies of Rome. Mutual proſcriptions and bloody maſſacres followed: each party triumphed in its turn; they were more animated and better diſciplined by their conteſts; both grew ſtronger; the commonwealth alone grew weaker; and POMPEY and CAESAR finiſhed the laſt tragical ſcene, which MARIUS and SYLLA began. In fine, the Roman commonwealth would have been diſſolved much ſooner than it was, by the defects I have mentioned, which many circumſtances concurred to aggravate, if ſuch a ſpirit of wiſdom, as well as courage, and ſuch an enthuſiaſm for the grandeur, the majeſty, and the duration of their empire had not poſſeſſed this people, as never poſſeſſed any other. When this ſpirit decayed, when this enthuſiaſm cooled, the conſtitution could not help, nay,

* Conciones magiſtratuum pæne pernoctantium in roſtris.——Accuſationes potentium reorum, & aſſignatæ etiam domibus inimicitiæ.——Procerum factiones, & aſſidua ſenatûs adverſum plebem certamina.

Dial. de Orat. QUINCTIL. TACITO inſcrip.

worked

worked againſt itſelf. That dictatorial power, on which the ſenate had always depended for preſerving it, completed the ruin of it, in the hands of CAESAR; and that tribunitial power, to which the people had always truſted the defence of their liberty, confirmed their ſlavery in the hands of AUGUSTUS.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

SIR,

THE defects, which I have preſumed to cenſure in the Roman conſtitution of government, were avoided in ſome of thoſe that were eſtabliſhed on the breaking of that empire, by the northern nations and the Goths; for I ſuſpect that the Goths were not properly and ſtrictly a northern nation, any more than the Huns and the Alans, tho they have been often confounded, and I believe by myſelf.----Let us caſt our eyes on Spain and France.

WE cannot arrive, as far as my ſcanty knowledge informs me, at any particular and authentic account of the ſcheme of that government which the weſtern Goths eſtabliſhed, when, driven out of Gaul by the Franks, they drove the Vandals and the Alans out of Spain; nor diſtinguiſh very accurately between ſuch inſtitutions as were parts of the original Gothic plan, and ſuch as were introduced into the ſeveral kingdoms that formed themſelves on the re-conqueſt of the country by the Spaniards from the Arabs and Moors. The original of the Cortes particularly is quite in the dark, as we are aſſured by a very * induſtrious enquirer and judicious writer. Thus much, however, we may aſſert, that the Gothic kings were at firſt elective, and always limited, even after they became hereditary; and that the Cortes, whenever it was eſtabliſhed, was an aſſembly, that may be more truly compared to a Britiſh parliament than the aſſembly of the ſtates of France could ever pretend to be. Churchmen had wriggled themſelves into

* Dr. GEDDES in his Miſcell. Tracts.

a ſhare

a ſhare of temporal power among the Goths, as they did in every country where they were admitted to preach the goſpel, tho without any authority from the goſpel; ſo that the Cortes conſiſted of prelates, as well as dukes, maſters of orders, earls and ricoſhomes, who compoſed the whole body of the nobility; and of the procurators of the commons; that is, of the citizens and burgeſſes, choſen by the cities and boroughs to repreſent and act for the whole body of the commons. To preſerve the independency of this aſſembly, theſe procurators were to be paid by the corporations for which they ſerved; the king was to give no office or ſalary to any of them; nay, a "* reſumption of rewards, granted to mem-"bers of the Cortes," was once at leaſt debated, if not enacted. In ſhort, he was not to name their preſident, nor even to ſend letters unopened to any of them. No money could be raiſed on the ſubjects, without the conſent of this aſſembly; and it was a ſtanding maxim, or order, that redreſs of grievances ſhould precede the grants of ſupplies. Such a frame of government as this ſeems built for duration; and, in fact, if it had not been undermined, it could not have been demoliſhed. The manner in which it was both undermined and demoliſhed totally at laſt, deſerves the attention of every man in Britain. It was undermined by the influence of the court, too much connived at and too long tolerated, on the members of the Cortes. Proſtitute wretches were found in thoſe days, I doubt not, as well as in ours, to maintain that the neceſſary independency of the prince could not be ſupported, without allowing a corrupt dependency of the Cortes on him; and they had in thoſe days ſuch ſucceſs in Caſtile, as we ought to hope they will never obtain in Britain. When corrupt majorities were thus ſecured, pretences were not wanting, nor will they ever be ſo, for mak-

* Dr. GEDDES in his Miſcell. Tracts.

ing conceſſions to the crown, repugnant to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and even inconſiſtent with the forms of it. Such pretences, however plauſible, would not have been admitted by men zealous to preſerve their liberty; becauſe any real danger, remote as well as immediate, to a free conſtitution, would in their balance outweigh all conſiderations of real expediency, and much more all the frivolous pretences of that kind. But the * members of the Cortes were no longer ſuch men, when Caſtile loſt her liberties under CHARLES the fifth. The cuſtom of bribing the repreſentatives of the commons, by gifts and promiſes, and ſo ſecuring a majority to the court, had long prevailed, as we have juſt now ſaid; and after that, it is not to be wondered at if exciſes, given for eight years only, became perpetual; if money was granted before grievances were redreſſed; and if the precedent ſet in the time of HENRY the ſecond, was followed in all ſucceeding reigns. The Cortes gave this prince a ſupply, for making war on the Moors; but the † ſum being repreſented by the court to be inſufficient for the ſervice, it was carried that, in caſe of a deficiency, the king might raiſe, without calling a Cortes, the money neceſſary to make good that deficiency. This vote of credit gave an incurable fatal wound to that conſtitution. I call it a vote of credit, tho the powers it gave ſeem to be leſs than thoſe which are given by ſome modern votes of credit; for ſurely there is a difference, and not a ſmall one, between a power to raiſe money directly on the people, for a ſervice known, and already approved, and provided for in part, by their repreſentatives, and a power to borrow money, on the national credit, for ſervices unknown, and to lay the nation under an obligation of paying for that which it is poſſible their repreſentatives may diſapprove.

* Dr. GEDDES in his Miſcell. Tracts. † Ibid.

THIS

This precedent having been made in favor of one king, and in one particular conjuncture, it became a prevailing argument in favor of every other king, and in every other conjuncture: for tho it may be, nay muſt be, in the vaſt variety of characters, and of conjunctures, prudent and juſt to grant in favor of ſome princes, and upon ſome occaſions, what it would be neither prudent nor juſt to grant in favor of other princes, and upon other occaſions, yet ſuch is the merit of every prince who fills a throne, or rather ſuch is the ſervile adulation paid to power, in what hands ſoever it be lodged, that general and almoſt univerſal experience ſhews this rule, which no man of ſenſe would break in the management of his private intereſts, abſolutely reverſed in the management of the moſt important, national intereſts. The inference to be drawn from hence is plainly this, that the inconveniency or danger of refuſing to every prince, and in every conjuncture, ſuch things as are inconſiſtent with the conſtitution of a free government, muſt be always leſs than the inconveniency or danger of granting them to any prince, and in any conjuncture.

Let me add this farther obſervation, which preſents itſelf ſo naturally after the former. Tho it be proper in all limited monarchies, to watch and guard againſt all conceſſions, or uſurpations, that may deſtroy the balance of power, on which the preſervation of liberty depends; yet is it certain that conceſſions to the crown from the other conſtituent parts of the legiſlature are almoſt alone to be feared. There is no danger that the crown ſhould make them to the others; and on this head the people may very ſafely truſt to thoſe who wear it, and thoſe who ſerve it. The nobility will not make them to the commons, without great ſtruggles, which give time for in-

terpoſitions, nor the commons to the nobility. But both may be eaſily induced to make them to the crown. The reaſons of this difference are obvious enough; for, firſt, a king is really nothing more than a ſupreme magiſtrate, inſtituted for the ſervice of the community, which requires that the executive power ſhould be veſted in a ſingle perſon. He hath, indeed, a crown on his head, a ſceptre in his hand, and velvet robes on his back, and he ſits elevated in a throne, whilſt others ſtand on the ground about him; and all this to denote that he is a king, and to draw the attention and reverence of the vulgar. Juſt ſo another man wears a mitre on his head, a croſier in his hand, and lawn ſleeves, and ſits in a purple elbow chair, to denote that he is a biſhop, and to excite the devotion of the multitude, who receive his benediction very thankfully on their knees. But ſtill the king, as well as the biſhop, holds an office, and owes a ſervice. "Officium eſt "imperare, non regnum." The king, when he commands, diſcharges a truſt, and performs a duty, as well as the ſubject, when he obeys. Notwithſtanding which, kings are apt to ſee themſelves in another light, and experience ſhews us that even they who made them what they are, are apt to take them for what they are not. From hence it happened in Spain, and may happen poſſibly in other countries, that the kings, inſtead of being ſatisfied with, and thankful for the dignity, honor, power and wealth, which they poſſeſſed in ſo eminent a degree above all other magiſtrates and members of the commonwealth, repined at their being poſſeſſed of no more. What they had was given them by the conſtitution; and what they had not was reſerved by the ſame authority to the nobility and to the commons. But they proceeded, and their ſycophants reaſoned, as if the ſole power of the government, and the whole wealth of the nation, belonged of right to them, and the limitations of the monarchy were ſo many uſurpations on the mo-

narch.----In the ſecond place, beſides this conſtant deſire of incroaching, there is another reaſon why conceſſions to the crown are more to be guarded againſt than others, in limited monarchies. The regal power reſides in one perſon. The other ſhares of the ſupreme power are aſſigned to bodies of men. From hence it follows that the intereſt of the king, and the intereſt of the crown, cannot well be divided in the mind of a prince; whereas the intereſt of each individual may be diſtinguiſhed from the intereſt of the nobility or of the commons, and ſtill more from that of the nation, in the minds of thoſe who compoſe an houſe of peers, or who are repreſentatives of the people. A king cannot be tempted to give up the intereſt of the crown, becauſe he cannot give up this public intereſt, without giving up his private intereſt; whereas the members of ſuch aſſemblies may promote their private intereſt, by ſacrificing to it that of the public. Several other reaſons might be inſiſted upon, to eſtabliſh the truth of the obſervation we have made, and to ſhew how unfairly they argue, who all along ſuppoſe that the independency of the crown may as eaſily be loſt, and the balance of power be deſtroyed on that ſide, by conceſſions from the prince, and uſurpations on him, as the independency of the lords or commons may be loſt, and the balance of power be deſtroyed on that ſide, by conceſſions to the prince, and by his uſurpations. Such reaſons, for inſtance, might be drawn from the difference of that influence which the crown hath on the other eſtates, and which the other eſtates have on the crown; as well as from the difference of the pretences, which may be urged on behalf of the crown, or of the nobility, or commons, to obtain ſuch conceſſions; for ſuppoſing them all co-equal, as parts of the legiſlature, yet if it be conſidered that the executive power is ſolely in the crown; that the diſpoſition of public money, as well as public employments, is a part of this

power;

power; that this power is in continual exerciſe, and may immediately affect, more or leſs, at one time or at another, every particular man, peer as well as commoner; whereas the other powers are exerciſed occaſionally, are continued or ſuſpended, in great meaſure, at the will of the prince, and are employed chiefly in matters of general, not particular concern; in fine, if it be conſidered farther, that the powers exerciſed by aſſemblies of peers and commoners, whether theſe aſſemblies be regarded as parts of the legiſlature, as the great councils of the nation, or as the judges and proſecutors of enormous offenders, are few and ſimple, directed to notorious purpoſes, conducted by rules always known, always the ſame, and always ſufficient to theſe purpoſes: whereas the branches of executive power are numerous and complicated, the rules various, and the purpoſes often unknown, often contingent; ſo that it may become difficult to judge either of the utility of the purpoſes, or of the ſufficiency of the powers: if all theſe things be conſidered, I ſay, we ſhall not be at a loſs to determine on which ſide the danger to liberty, in a limited monarchy, lies; and whether conceſſions to the crown, in prejudice of the conſtitution, are not more likely to be made, than conceſſions from it.

HAPPY had it been for the people of Caſtile, if they had ſeen this danger in time, and had remedied, whilſt the remedies were in their power, thoſe defects in their conſtitution, whatever they were, which gave their kings by degrees ſuch an influence over the Cortes, as overturned at laſt the whole conſtitution, and gained to the German race, that began to reign in CHARLES the fifth, (for his father PHILIP is ſcarce to be reckoned) ſuch an abſolute power as the Gothic kings had never been able to obtain. Tho CHARLES the fifth was a very able prince, yet the honor, for ſuch it will be eſteemed by

ſome men, or more truly the infamy of inſlaving Caſtile, muſt not be aſcribed to his ſuperior capacity, nor to that of his miniſters. Had he been the meereſt tool, a thing of ſtraw, but ſomething leſs than a ſcarecrow, and unable to protect the property of his ſubjects, he might ſtill have taken their liberties from them in that conjuncture, as he did moſt effectually. Corruption was eſtabliſhed; a majority of the Cortes was bribed; the nobility was detached from the common intereſt by titles, places, penſions, and grants; and the clergy in general, for exceptions there were, took no farther ſhare in it than their particular piques, or ſome indirect and fleeting conſiderations inſpired them to take. The nation ſaw itſelf betrayed, and the commons proteſted loudly againſt the proceedings of their repreſentatives. But this was the very point for which the enemies of the Caſtilian conſtitution waited; and as ſoon as a pretence for employing force was given them, they muffled themſelves up in that threadbare cloak of zeal for the government, and ſtabbed their country to the heart. An ordinance of the Cortes had been made about an hundred years before, againſt increaſing the ſtanding forces of the kingdom to more than four thouſand ſoldiers in garriſons, and fifteen hundred ginets. This ordinance had not been very well obſerved. The long wars with the Moors made armies often neceſſary, when there was no actual war. The danger of being invaded by the Moors, for every Mooriſh king was deemed a pretender to the throne, might ſerve to make them ſo repreſented; and when this reaſon failed intirely, as it did by the conqueſt of Granada, the laſt poſſeſſion of theſe people in Spain, pretences for keeping armies on foot were ſtill to be found. There were ſtill Mooriſh factions; the new chriſtians were Moors in their hearts; amongſt the old chriſtians there were ſeveral who favored them; the people were not to be truſted with their own preſervation. Chievres, the rapacious mini-

miniſter of CHARLES the fifth, and his journeymen, for ſo were thoſe Spaniards called, according to Dr. GEDDES, who did not care how much their country was plundered by foreigners, provided they ſhared the ſpoils; Chievres, I ſay, and his journeymen, a real faction, and perhaps not a great one, were the faſt friends of the government. The reſt of the nation were open or ſecret enemies. According to this excellent logic, the former were to be protected in blundering, for they were guilty of that too, as well as in plundering; and the latter were to be oppreſſed for complaining. The nation was ſacrificed to a faction, and an excellent conſtitution deſtroyed, in favor of a profligate government. This deſtruction however would not have been ſo eaſily accompliſhed, nor would Caſtilians alone have inſlaved Caſtile to a foreign race, after aſſerting their liberty ſo often, and ſo boldly, againſt princes of their own country, if two other circumſtances had not concurred. FERDINAND had conquered Navarre, and a regular, diſciplined army defended that conqueſt againſt the French. This army, which was at hand, marched into Caſtile, defeated the commons, and extinguiſhed liberty in a country where it had been long declining. The nobility was detached from the commons by grants of land, amongſt other conſiderations, as I ſaid above; and the commons renewed their conteſt on this head, perhaps unjuſtly, to be ſure very unſeaſonably. The commons however were juſtified for taking arms, in the opinion of the nobility, and even in that of ADRIAN, who governed during the abſence of CHARLES, whoſe preceptor he had been; for this honeſt man, too honeſt to be long endured on the papal throne, where he was afterwards placed, affirmed that all the troubles of Caſtile were cauſed by the king, and by his covetous and tyrannical miniſters. The conduct of the commons upon this great occaſion, was in many inſtances raſh and violent, as well as ill adviſed and weak. But they were

tumul-

tumultuous aſſemblies driven into deſpair; and the nobility, who might have had great ſway amongſt them, and might have helped to regulate their fire, and to keep them ſober, helped on the contrary to make them mad, either by neglecting them, or by taking part againſt them, till it was too late; and then complained of their being mad, with as ill a grace as the principal men of Rome, who helped to corrupt that people, complained of their corruption, and aſſigned it as a reaſon for depriving them of their liberty.

THERE cannot be a greater ſoleciſm in politics than that of a nobility, under monarchical government, who ſuffer the liberty of the commons to be taken away. In ariſtocracies, the nobility get whatever the commons loſe; but in monarchies, the crown alone is the gainer, and the certain conſequence of their helping to enſlave the commons, muſt be that of being enſlaved themſelves at laſt. How, indeed, ſhould it be otherwiſe, ſince the liberty of the commons cannot be taken away, unleſs the conſtitution be firſt broken; and ſince neither the peers, nor any one elſe, can hold their privileges or their properties, by a better tenure than that of arbitrary will, when the conſtitution is once broken? Was it poſſible to doubt of this truth, we might find the proof of it, without going out of the country where we are; I mean Spain. Amongſt all the ſurpriſing phaenomena which have appeared in the world of late years, there are none that have ſtruck mankind with more aſtoniſhment, than thoſe inſtances of perſons raiſed to the higheſt poſts of power, authority and command, nay to empire, who had not, either from their obſcure birth, or their low talents, or their ſtill lower habits, the leaſt occaſion even to dream of ſuch elevation. Among other countries Spain hath had her ſhare of them; and the grandees, as they are pompouſly ſtiled, the ſucceſſors of thoſe men, who thought to

riſe on the ruin of the commons of Caſtile; they, who have the vain honor of cocking their hats in the preſence of their prince, have been ſeen to ſtand at awful diſtance, or approach with reſpectful cringe, in the preſence of a paraſite and buffoon.

I know full well that in ſuch governments as we ſpeak of here, it is both the duty and intereſt of the nobility to oppoſe the exceſſes of the commons; but I know too that they have another duty, which they are not to leave undone; another point of intereſt, which they are not to neglect: and therefore I have ſpoken of this ſecond eſtate in our government as of a middle order, that are properly mediators between the other two, in the eye of our conſtitution. Whilſt the peers maintain this character, they will be able to diſcharge this duty; but they would ceaſe to be ſo, if it was poſſible they ſhould ever become the tools of faction, or the vaſſals of a miniſter. In mediations of this kind, different from thoſe that are more commonly called ſuch, mediators mingle in the conteſt, are parties concerned, and can by that alone expect to mediate with effect, whether they be conſidered as bodies of men, or individuals. When the commons are aſſiſted by the peers in their reaſonable endeavors to promote or reſtore frugality, to ſecure liberty, and to correct all ſorts of mal-adminiſtration; the peers will have, both collectively and ſeparately, a credit with the people, as well as with the repreſentatives of the people; by which they may contribute to check the latter, whenever an houſe of commons ſhall grow unreaſonable, factious, or ſeditious. But if the peers of the realm neglect, or oppoſe the commons in their juſt attempts, and forfeit by conſequence the character of impartiality, and even the air of independency, the peers will then add little ſtrength to the crown, whenever the evil day comes, and have as little power to pre-

vent it from coming. There was a time, our fathers ſaw it, when an houſe of commons deſtroyed, inſtead of ſupporting, the conſtitution, and introduced tyranny, under pretence of excluding ſlavery. I think it might be ſhewn, from the anecdotes of that age, that this could not have happened, if the court had not been ſo long and ſo partially abetted by the greateſt part of the nobility and clergy, both in the houſe of lords and out of it. An univerſal and timely concurrence with the ſpirit of the commons, which was pious in the true ſenſe of the word at firſt, would have had, I preſume, the full effect that every honeſt man propoſed in a parliamentary reformation of the ſtate; and thoſe fatal opportunities, that were afterwards given to the republican, preſbyterian and independent factions, would have been avoided. But they who could have trimmed, (for there is a wiſe and honeſt, as well as a ſilly and corrupt trimming) or have mediated with ſucceſs, loſt the power of doing either; ſome by abetting the crown ſo long, for fear of the commons, and others by concurring with the commons ſo far, for fear of the crown, that the people in general had no confidence in the former, and that the latter were afraid to truſt their prince after all they had done againſt him. If any men had truſted to the plauſible profeſſions of the court at that time, and the court had ſubdued the oppoſite party, we may judge, without any breach of charity, that theſe men would have found themſelves deceived. Juſt ſo, if any men who meant the reformation, not the deſtruction of the ſtate, believed in the canting reformers of that age, ſuch men were no doubt egregiouſly deceived. But I confeſs myſelf of opinion, and ſurely upon no improbable grounds, that there were few, or no ſuch men. The good intentions of the court were diſtruſted even by thoſe who took arms for the king; and the ill intentions of many of the leaders on the other ſide were ſuſpected, no doubt, by many who took arms for the parliament. But

two of the three eſtates being ripe for the raſheſt enterprizes, and the third being in no condition to mediate, the extremes claſhed, without any power ſufficient to interpoſe; and when the ſword was drawn, the ſword could alone decide. I conclude therefore, from theſe two examples, that as there cannot be a greater error in politics than that of a nobility, who aſſiſt a prince to take away the liberties and privileges of the commons, which was the caſe in Caſtile, ſo the ſureſt way of preventing that terrible dilemma, wherein men are obliged to chuſe either ſubmiſſion to tyrannical government, or concurrence with an enraged and no longer governable people, which hath been the caſe in Caſtile and Britain both, is for the nobility, and the principal men amongſt the commons, to engage ſo early in the cauſe of liberty, that the former may be always in condition to mediate with effect, and the latter have always power to allay the intemperate heat of their own body.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER XV.

SIR,

BUT to reſume the compariſon of other conſtitutions of government with our own, I ſay, that if the Gothic conſtitution in Spain, either by original defects, or by deviating from, and not being reduced again in time to its firſt principles, was deſtroyed through the corruption of parliaments, and by the force of an army, one of which betrayed, and the other conquered the commons of Caſtile; the commons of France ſeem either not to have had, or to have loſt, in the dark beginnings of that monarchy, all ſhare in the ſupreme, legiſlative power. The great, original defect of having but two eſtates to ſhare the ſupreme power, is an objection common to the Roman, and to the French conſtitutions, with this difference; of the three ſimple forms of government, the monarchical, the ariſtocratical, and the democratical, Rome wanted the firſt, and France hath always wanted the laſt. Rome had a nobility and a commonalty, but no magiſtracy fitted by it's inſtitution to anſwer the purpoſes of that ſupreme magiſtrate, who is called king even in limited monarchies. France hath always had a king and a nobility, and hath felt in their turns all the evils of monarchical and ariſtocratical tyranny. But the people have not had, I preſume, ſince the government of the Franks was fully eſtabliſhed on this ſide of the Rhine, and the form of their monarchy ſettled, any ſhare in the ſupreme power, either collectively or repreſentatively, how much ſoever a contrary notion may have been countenanced by ſome writers, and have been generally entertained, at leaſt in other countries.

THERE

THERE is no nation in the world, ſays MEZERAI, more illuſtrious, nor any whoſe original is more obſcure than that of the French. They who would diſpute the firſt, could hardly diſpute the laſt; and it is no buſineſs of mine to controvert either. As dark as their original is, we may diſcover enough to eſtabliſh what hath been ſaid, and to carry on the compariſon we are making.

THE Franks were a nation of Germany, ſeated at one time between the Elbe, Rhine and Neckar, and at another, that is, in the reign of THEODOSIUS the younger, extending themſelves on the German ſide of the Rhine, from Cologne down to Nimighen, and ſtill lower. What is known therefore of the government of the antient Germans, either from TACITUS, or any other good authority, may be properly applied to their government, whilſt they continued in Germany, and even after they ſettled in Gaul, till ſuch times as we find, by relations more modern, that a different form of government prevailed amongſt them. Now it ſeems to me extremely plain, that a different form of government did prevail amongſt them even from the time of CLOVIS, the conqueror of Gaul. Thus, for inſtance, that paſſage in TACITUS, where he ſays "* that "the antient Germans took their kings on account of nobi- "lity, and their generals on account of valor; that the "power of their kings was not abſolute and unlimited; and "that their generals commanded by the authority which their "example, rather than their power gave them;" that paſſage, I ſay, is properly enough applied to the Franks before, and perhaps during the conqueſt of Gaul; but very improperly afterwards, when † CLOVIS, both king and general of that

* Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute ſumunt; nec regibus infinita, nec libera poteſtas; & duces exemplo potiùs quam imperio præſunt. De Mor. Germ.

† BOULAINV. Mem. Hiſt.

people,

people, had founded the monarchy which he tranſmitted to his poſterity. That the nation of the Franks was divided into ſeveral tribes, or clans, and that theſe were governed by ſeveral little princes, cannot be doubted.----" Habebat quot pagos, tot " paene duces." That a general was choſen to command the whole with ſovereign authority, but according to certain rules made by common conſent, whenever any great enterprize was undertaken, and that CLOVIS himſelf, tho he ſucceeded his father CHILDERIC in commanding over a part of the Franks, was choſen in this manner, and for this purpoſe, is certain. In his firſt expedition, he led an army of free-booters, and was obliged by compact to divide the ſpoil by lots amongſt them. The ſtory, which ſo many authors have told, after GREGORY of Tours, of a private ſoldier, who refuſed to leave to his diſpoſition a veſſel of gold, that had been taken out of a church at Rheims, and broke it before his face, is a proof that he was nothing more at firſt than I have repreſented him, the head of a troop of adventurers, who choſe him to lead them, but made their conditions with him. The Franks therefore might be at this time, in ſome ſenſe, " * all free, perfectly equal, and in-" dependent;" but will it follow from hence that they continued to be ſo, in any ſenſe, after CLOVIS had founded their monarchy; had deſtroyed all their little kings; united in one body, and under his own domination, all their little ſtates, and changed the form of their government, by appointing dukes, earls, vicars, and other magiſtrates, to govern under him, according to the model of government in the latter Roman empire? Certainly not. However this change was brought about, and to whatever it was owing, the monarchy of the Franks in Gaul was built on the ruins of their former government. This BOULAINVILLIERS himſelf confeſſes, when

* BOULAINV. Mem. Hiſt.

he

he ſays (tho not very accurately nor conſiſtently, as I imagine, in calling their former government a kind of ariſtocracy) that "the principle of union, which founded the monarchy on the "ruins of a kind of ariſtocracy, was the miſtaken ambition of "particular men." In ſhort, proofs enough may be collected out of this very author, to ſhew that the government of the Franks, even under the firſt race of their kings, was not only different from the German governments, but in ſome reſpects founded on quite oppoſite principles. One of theſe reſpects, which is immediately to my purpoſe, I ſhall mention.

THE general aſſemblies that were held at firſt in the month of March, and afterwards in the month of May, were national aſſemblies, indeed, but not ſuch as the antient Germans held; among whom the [a] principal men conſulted and decided about the leaſt, and the whole body of the people about the greateſt affairs. In theſe aſſemblies of the French the people had nothing to do, unleſs we reckon for ſomething the function of [b] hollowing, which the author I have juſt now quoted aſſigns them, and which he ſays that cuſtom had rendered neceſſary. In one word, the people had not any ſhare in the ſupreme power, either collectively or repreſentatively, in the original plan of the French government. Whether they acquired any ſhare in this power afterwards, let us enquire next. [c] MEZERAI pretends, and indeed the whole hiſtory of France vouches for him, "[d] that no nation ever honored their nobility ſo much

[a] De minoribus principes, de majoribus omnes. TACIT.

[b] Ils (that is the French) laiſſerent paſſer aux hauts magiſtrats, les ducs, les comtes, & les vicaires, le droit de la nation entiere; de ſortque le commun n'eut plus d'autres fonctions dans les aſſemblées réelles, que d'y paroitre pours les acclamations, que l'uſage rendoit neceſſaires. BOULAINV. Mem. Hiſt.

[c] L. 2. [d] Jamais nation n'honora tant la nobleſſe que celle la; car non ſeulement elle etoit exempte de toute ſorte d'impots, et corvées, mais commandoit à baguette à ſes inferieurs, ſur leſquels elle avoit preſque droit de ſervitude.

"as the French; amongſt whom the nobility was not only "exempt from all ſorts of impoſitions and charges, but com- "manded abſolutely all inferior ranks, who were almoſt in a "ſtate of ſervitude." How could it be otherwiſe, when the nobility, and chief magiſtrates, and the clergy, compoſed alone the national councils, or parliaments, and even exerciſed diſtributive juſtice all over the kingdom? Their power increaſed, as that of the kings of the firſt race diminiſhed. CHARLES MARTEL, indeed, who truſted to that battle-axe which gave him his name, and to foreign troops, laid aſide the national aſſemblies, neglected the nobility, and miſuſed even the clergy, who damned him for it. But PEPIN found it neceſſary to regain both, and attach them to his intereſt, in order to mount the throne. By attaching them, he attached the whole nation to him. CHILDERIC was depoſed, and he choſen king in a general aſſembly held at Soiſſons, which MEZERAI calls moſt improperly, ſince the expreſſion communicates a falſe idea to his reader, the ſtates, "les etats." Theſe aſſemblies, in his time, in that of his ſon CHARLES the great, and ſo on, conſiſted of the nobility and clergy alone; and once more it is beyond all diſpute certain, that the people had no more ſhare in theſe national councils, under the ſecond, than under the firſt race of the kings of France.

WHEN the third race of theſe kings began in HUGUES CAPET, the lords were ſo powerful in their eſtates, and ſo independent in their governments, that he was forced to come to a kind of compoſition with them. They became ſovereigns, each in his territory, but held of the crown, and acknowledged the king for the ſupreme lord. There was ſcarce a town which had not a little ſovereign, ſcarce a caſtle without ſome little tyrant. The parliaments, in theſe ages, took ſeveral

turns; "Ills prirent divers plis," as [a] PASQUIER expreſſes himſelf; but ſtill they conſiſted of princes, great lords, biſhops and abbots, who decided in them their diſputes with one another, and with the king, and maintained by theſe means a ſort of national confederacy, or foederal union of many ſtates, politically united under one head. Such aſſemblies as theſe, under the ſecond and third race, were the original inſtitutions, from whence the [b] parliaments of France have proceeded, as many alterations as they have received, and as much as they are now changed: ſo that we may ſafely affirm the parliaments of France never gave the people any ſhare in the government of that kingdom; and whoever entertains a notion that the aſſemblies of the ſtates did, or that [c] theſe aſſemblies are of great antiquity, or that they are the foundation of the liberty of the people of that country, will find himſelf, on due examination, groſly deceived.

THESE aſſemblies of the three eſtates, the nobility, clergy and commons, were inven ed firſt by [d] PHILIP LE BEL. They were intirely unknown before the year 1301. The people had no right to any ſuch aſſemblies; and when they were inſtituted, they were plainly deſigned for nothing leſs than the good of the people. Long after the eſtabliſhment of the CAPETIAN race, when taxes grew heavy, and were laid on and levied very arbitrarily, [e] ſeditions and rebellions of an oppreſſed people, who had no other recourſe, followed. To prevent theſe, not only writs, or orders, were ſent to the nobility and clergy, in the ſeveral ſheriffwicks and bailywicks, but to the

[a] Recherches de la France. [b] Primitive origine & inſtitution des parlemens. Ib. [c] Ib. [d] L'aſſemblée des etats.——fut une idée toute nouvelle de PHILIPPE LE BEL, & juſqu' alors entierement inuſitée.

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[e] PASQU. Rech.

commons, to aſſemble and take into conſideration how to redreſs grievances, and ſupport the public expences; and after ſuch conſideration had amongſt themſelves, to depute ſome perſons of each order, or eſtate, to confer together in the place appointed for holding ſuch general aſſemblies. "The com-"mons were added to theſe aſſemblies, * ſays PASQUIER, againſt "the antient order or practice of France, for no other reaſon "than this, that the principal burthen, or charge, was to fall "upon them." This was the true reaſon. Redreſs of grievances had no part in the ſchemes of that rapacious and profuſe prince, who was the author of this inſtitution; and he that conſiders the manner in which theſe aſſemblies were convened, the powers they were ſuffered to exerciſe, the ſubordination in which the commons particularly were kept, and the habitual, unavoidable influence under which they lay, will be eaſily convinced that ſuch aſſemblies were fitted to do the jobs and ſanctify the iniquity of the court, and nothing more. If at any time they make any good ordinances for the reformation of the ſtate, "† theſe ordinances are, ſays honeſt PAS-"QUIER, like fine pieces of tapeſtry, hung up to make a ſhew "to poſterity." They have no other effect. "But the impoſition "granted to the king hath its full effect." I conclude therefore, and upon ſufficient grounds, that even ſince the eſtabliſhment of theſe aſſemblies of the eſtates, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, the people of France have had no real ſhare in the ſupreme power of the government, either collectively or repreſentatively.

* Le roturier fut expres ajouté, contre l'ancien ordre de la France, à cette aſſemblée, &c.

† ---- Ces ſont belles tapiſſeries, qui ſervent ſeulement de parade à une poſterité. Cependant l'impoſt que l'on accorde au roy eſt fort bien mis à effet.

I MIGHT illuſtrate and prove what is here advanced, by the example of every aſſembly of the ſtates of France, of which we have any good accounts, from the firſt in 1301 to the laſt that was held, as I remember, in 1614. But ſuch a deduction would carry us too far. I ſhall content myſelf therefore with making two obſervations.

FIRST, that theſe farces, for ſuch theſe aſſemblies were, and ſuch they were deſigned to be, owe their inſtitution not only to one of the worſt kings, but to one of the worſt miniſters that France ever ſaw, ENGUERAND DE MARIGNY, who was called the coadjutor and the governor of the kingdom; the moſt inſolent, the moſt avaricious, and the moſt prodigal man of his age. The great ability of this miniſter, on which his whole merit with a greedy maſter was raiſed, conſiſted in making his adminiſtration a ſyſtem of violence and fraud, in order to plunder and inſlave the people. When he durſt not employ one, he turned himſelf to the other; and how groſly and impudently he managed even fraud, it may not be improper to take notice, in one inſtance, becauſe we ſhall ſee the better, by this inſtance, what the nature and effect of theſe aſſemblies were, of which we ſpeak, and what uſe the court made of them from their firſt inſtitution. ENGUERAND DE MARIGNY then meeting with great oppoſition to * ſome taxes he had deviſed, propoſed the calling an aſſembly of the ſtates, and hoped probably that he might gain the commons to favor the intention he had of extending theſe taxes to the nobility and clergy. A great ſcaffold was erected. The king, the lords and the clergy took their places on it. The commons attended at the foot of it. The miniſter made a moſt vehement declamation, to ſtir the paſſions of the audience, and made no ſcruple of inſinuating in it, what nei-

* BOULAINV. let. ſur les anciens parl. de France.

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ther he nor his maſter intended to perform, a promiſe of reimburſing, after the expedition propoſed, what the people ſhould give to the king. The king roſe from his throne, and advanced to the extremity of the ſcaffold, that he might ſecond by his looks the harangue of his treaſurer, and ſee who thoſe were that refuſed, or conſented to the aid he demanded. The deputies of Paris promiſed to give a ſufficient ſupply, or to follow the king in their perſons to the war. The other deputies concurred in this general engagement, and the aſſembly broke up, without any farther deliberation, or any ordinance of the eſtates. But an ordinance of the king ſoon followed; a * general exciſe was impoſed by his authority, as if it had been the grant of the eſtates to him; and his miniſter had a number of harpies ready, whom he let looſe to deſolate the kingdom, by levying this infamous tax, for the conſideration of ſome little advance made to the king. If you aſk what were the conſequences of theſe proceedings, it will be ſufficient to mention two. The tax of a fifth on the revenues of the ſubject, which is the proportion of our land-tax of four ſhillings in the pound, was continued, tho the general exciſe had been impoſed; and † ENGUERAND DE MARIGNY was hanged in the ſucceeding reign for this amongſt other crimes, tho not by an aſſembly of the eſtates; for the eſtates had neither the opportunity nor the power of reſenting the greateſt inſult that could be offered them, and the greateſt injury that could be done to the nation.

THE next obſervation I have to make is very ſhort, but I think very pertinent, and very important.------This example

* ——— Six deniers par livre de toutes les merchandiſes, victuailles, boiſſons, & denrées, ——— Vendues dans le royaume.
BOULAINV. let. ſur les anciens parl. de France.

† MEZERAI, DANIEL, &c. Sous Lovis Hutin.

ſhews

ſhews us clearly how true it is, that no inſtruments of tyranny can be found ſo ſure and effectual as an aſſembly of the eſtates of a realm, when ſuch an aſſembly is ſo conſtituted as to want the power, which was from the firſt the caſe of the three eſtates in France, and the ſame muſt happen when they are ſo managed as to want the will, which became at laſt the caſe of the Cortes in Spain, to ſecure the liberty and defend the property of the people, againſt ſuch kings as PHILIP LE BEL, and ſuch coadjutors as MARIGNY. This prince and his miniſter had ſtrained prerogative to the utmoſt, and had governed by it very tyrannically. Whilſt this expedient would do, they tried no other; but when they apprehended it might fail them, they added a deputation of the commons to the aſſembly of the eſtates; that, ſeeming to create a new controul on the crown, they might in reality give greater ſcope and freer exerciſe to arbitrary will. The friends of liberty therefore, who live under limited monarchies, cannot be too careful to preſerve their conſtitution in vigor, nor too fearful leſt their repreſentatives ſhould be ſo influenced as to neglect their privileges, miſapply their powers, and depart from their integrity; ſince theſe friends of liberty ſee that the greateſt maſters of tyranny have judged the form, without the ſpirit, of a free government more favorable to their ſchemes of oppreſſion, than all the authority that abſolute monarchy can give; and that they made an innovation in the form of their government on this very motive, and for this very purpoſe.

I am, SIR, &c.

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LETTER XVI.

SIR,

I HAVE dwelt long, perhaps too long, on the laſt head. I was induced to it, not only becauſe the account I have given, according to the truth of hiſtory, is contrary to the national prejudices of many people on this ſubject, as I hinted before; but principally becauſe the great point of ſtrength and ſecurity, on which the freedom of our conſtitution reſts, will appear in a fuller light, by being thus contraſted with the conſtitution of the French government. Both their anceſtors and ours came out of Germany, and had probably much the ſame manners, the ſame cuſtoms, and the ſame forms of government. But as they proceeded differently in the conqueſts they made, ſo did they in the eſtabliſhments that followed. The conqueſt of Britain was a work of time, and the Saxon monarchy was long in forming. The conqueſt of Gaul was carried on with greater rapidity, and the French monarchy was ſooner formed. From hence ſome reaſons might be drawn to account, amongſt others, for that great difference between the conſtitutions of the two monarchies, which theſe two German nations founded, at no great diſtance of time, in Britain and in Gaul. But I ſhall not indulge myſelf in gueſſing at the reaſons, or accidents, that determined the Franks to the diviſion they made of their people, and to the form of government they eſtabliſhed. Whatever reaſons or accidents determined them, this is certain, that the diſtinction of lord and vaſſal became the general diſtinction of the whole nation; that the * commons amongſt them were little better than ſlaves,

* Le peuple, d'un autre coté, ſe fait juſtice, reconnoiſſant combien la condition naturelle le doit eloigner du concours du government, & dans ſe ſentiment ne ſe fait entendre que par requete. BOULAINV. let. ſur les an. parl.

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whatever they had been in Germany; and that they were ſo inured to ſervitude under their kings, prelates and lords, that they looked on themſelves at laſt, not juſtly, but unjuſtly, as men who had no right, no, not even a right by nature, to any ſhare in the government of that community whereof they made ſo vaſtly the principal part.

In Britain another conſtitution was formed, and another ſpirit prevailed. The Saxons had a * nobility too, ariſing from perſonal valor, or wiſdom, continued by blood, and ſometimes conferred by the prince, however legally at firſt it matters not to enquire, on ſuch as held great offices about his perſon. All theſe were the adelings, or nobles, an handful in compariſon of the frilingi, or free-born, who made the body of the Saxon people. The freedom of this people was erected on two columns, that have proved more durable than braſs. They were parties to the making, and to the executing all the general laws of the kingdom. They ſhared the legiſlative power; were joined to the lords in the adminiſtration of juſtice; and no magiſtrate, or officer, could exerciſe juriſdiction, nor authority over them, no not eccleſiaſtical, without their conſent and election. The comites ex plebe, who were choſen for this laſt function, the adminiſtration of juſtice, made one rank amongſt the Saxon commonalty. The cuſtodes pagani, ſuch as had an helmet, a coat of mail, and a gilt ſword, for their ordinary arms, whether they fought on foot, or on horſeback, made another rank; and the plain pagani, or ceorles, made the loweſt. But even theſe were totally diſtinct from, and far ſuperior to the lazzi, or ſlaves, nay to the free lazzi, ſuch as had been ſlaves, and were become free. The ceorles were freemen to all intents and purpoſes, and in

* Nat. Bacon. Hiſt. & Pol. Diſ.

all the eſſentials of liberty, as much as the Saxons of any ſuperior rank, and were capable of riſing to any ſuperior rank by merit, or by favor.

These are the ſources, from which all the diſtinction of rank and degree, that exiſt at this day amongſt us, have flowed. Theſe are the general principles of all our liberties. That this Saxon conſtitution hath varied in many particulars, and at ſeveral periods of time, I am far from denying. That it did ſo, for inſtance, on the entry of the Normans, tho certainly not near ſo much as many have been willing to believe, and to make others believe, is allowed. Nay, let it be allowed for argument's ſake, and not otherwiſe, that during the firſt confuſion, and the ſubſequent diſorders which neceſſarily accompany and follow ſo great and ſo violent a revolution, the ſcheme of the Saxon conſtitution was broken, and the liberties of the people invaded, as well as the crown uſurped. Let us even agree that laws were made, without the conſent of the people; that officers and magiſtrates, civil, military and eccleſiaſtical, were impoſed without their election: in one word, that theſe Norman kings, and the lords, had mounted each other too high to be lords over freemen, and that the government was intirely monarchical and ariſtocratical, without any exerciſe of democratical power. Let all this be granted, and the utmoſt that can be made of it will amount to this, that confuſion and violence at the entry, and for ſome time after, under the government of a foreign race, introduced many illegal practices, and ſome foreign principles of policy, contrary to the ſpirit, and letter too, of the antient conſtitution; and that theſe kings and the lords "abuſed their power over the "freemen, by extortion and oppreſſion, as lords over tenants." But it will remain true, that neither kings nor lords, nor both

together, " * could prevail over them, or gain their conſent to " give their right, or the law, up to the king's beck. But ſtill " the law remained arbiter both of king and people, and the " parliament ſupreme expounder and judge both of it and " them." Tho the branches were lopped, and the tree loſt it's beauty for a time, yet the root remained untouched, was ſet in a good ſoil, and had taken ſtrong hold in it: ſo that care and culture, and time were indeed required, and our anceſtors were forced to water it, if I may uſe ſuch an expreſſion, with their blood; but with this care, and culture, and time, and blood, it ſhot up again with greater ſtrength than ever, that we might ſit quiet and happy under the ſhade of it; for if the ſame form was not exactly reſtored in every part, a tree of the ſame kind, and as beautiful, and as luxuriant as the former, grew up from the ſame root.

To bring our diſcourſe to that point which is here immediately concerned, parliaments were never interrupted, nor the right of any eſtate taken away, however the exerciſe of it might be diſturbed. Nay, they ſoon took the forms they ſtill preſerve, were conſtituted almoſt as they now are, and were intirely built on the ſame general principles, as well as directed to the ſame purpoſes.

When I ſay that they were conſtituted almoſt as they now are, I do not mean to enter into any of thoſe minute queſtions, about which a man may employ much time and ſtudy, and have as little true and uſeful knowledge of our conſtitution as the moſt ignorant man alive. But I propoſe to make a ſhort reflection or two on the property and power of the three eſtates that compoſe our parliament, as they ſtood

* Nat. Bacon ſummary concluſ. of the firſt part of hiſt. and pol. diſc.

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formerly, and as they now ſtand; becauſe altho our parliaments were compoſed of king, lords and commons in thoſe days, as well as theſe, yet the difference of the weight which each of theſe eſtates hath caſt into the ſcale of government, at different periods, does in effect make ſome difference in the conſtitution of parliaments: and by conſidering this difference, our thoughts will be led the better to judge of the true poiſe of our conſtitution, on maintaining which our all depends; ſince the nearer we keep to it, the ſafer our liberty is, and ſince every variation from it is dangerous to our liberty, in a degree proportionable to ſuch variation. Property then, and power by conſequence, have changed hands, or rather have ſhifted much in the ſame hands ſince the Norman aera. Kings, lords and the church were in thoſe days, and long afterwards, the great proprietors; and by the nature of tenures, as well as by the bulk of their eſtates, they held the commons in no ſmall ſubjection, and ſeem to have governed without much regard to them, or to their concurrence, in many caſes. But the regard that was not paid them at firſt, the kings, the lords and the church found it neceſſary to pay them in a ſhort time; and that authority, that weight in the balance of power, which property did not give them, they ſoon acquired, or rather reſumed by their numbers, and by the circumſtances that followed. By the circumſtances that followed, I mean the great diſorders in the ſtate, and the civil wars, which the ambition of princes, of the nobility, and of the church too, created. In all theſe conflicts, ſome of the commons "* holding for the king, who promiſed liberty from "the lords, and others ſiding with the lords, who promiſed "them liberty from the king," they came off better in the end than their principals, and an example rarely to be paralleled

* Nat. Bacon hiſt. and pol. diſc. concluſ. of the 2d part.

was ſet; for general liberty was nurſed by theſe means, under the wings of particular ambition. In later days, when the nation, harraſſed and ſpent by the long wars of YORK and LANCASTER, ſeemed glad to ſettle under any ſtable government; and in this temper gave many advantages to the cunning of HENRY the ſeventh, which the violence of his ſon improved; it is certain that the commons ſuffered extremely from the avarice of one, the profuſion of the other, and the high-ſtrained prerogative of both. But then their ſufferings were temporary, and may be ſaid to have ended with theſe reigns; whereas the ſufferings of the nobility and the church were permanent and irretrievable. "The king and his council," ſays the author I quoted laſt, "under color of liveries and retain-"ders, brought the whole kingdom to be of their livery." It was ſo. But ſtill the commons loſt nothing, and gained much. They were more under ſubjection to the crown; but they were leſs under ſubjection to the lords and the church. Not only the dependencies on theſe were broken, but the lords and the church were made more dependent on the crown than the commons had been on them. The lords were obliged to attend the court at their own expence, and might alienate their eſtates to defray this expence. A great part of the lands of the church were confiſcated and parcelled out to thoſe who could buy, at very cheap rates; and the increaſe of trade, which begun about this time to be very conſiderable, put the commons into a condition of being the buyers. Thus were the old foundations of property and power ſapped on one ſide, and new foundations laid on the other. Some of the weight of the church continued in the ſcale of the lords, and ſome of it hath gone ſince into that of the commons. The parliamentary control of the crown did not become leſs, but it became more equally and more uſefully placed. Democracy was ſo well poiſed with ariſtocracy, after this great

change, that if they divided, they could not invade one another; and if they united, they could not be invaded by the monarchy. Far different was the caſe in other countries, where the crown got the better of the lords, and baffled, at leaſt in ſome degree, the monſtrous attempts of eccleſiaſtical uſurpation. In France, for inſtance, when the incroachments of the papal power were checked, the church compounded with the crown, and an alliance ſucceeded, of the monarchy with the hierarchy. But if the church was able to compound, the nobility was forced to ſubmit in that kingdom: ſo that the authority and wealth of the church being fixed on the ſide of the crown, the whole ſtrength and influence of the nobility being taken from them, and incorporated with the power of the crown, and the commons having nothing to do in that government but to pay taxes, and carry arms, the kings of France are become abſolute monarchs; and whatever liberty, or appearance of liberty, there was in that conſtitution, it is totally deſtroyed.

When I ſay that parliaments were intirely built on the ſame general principles, as well as directed to the ſame purpoſes, as they ſtill are, I ſhall be juſtified by the whole tenor of our hiſtory, and of our law. Let us conſider this in a caſe the plaineſt imaginable, tho it ſuffers ſo much debate through the effrontery of ſome men. Let us conſider it relatively to that great principle, that parliaments ought to be independent of the crown, in all reſpects, except ſuch as are ſettled by the law and cuſtom of parliament, and concerning which there is no diſpute. Now, this general principle hath not only been always the ſame, but it hath been always ſo declared, in the moſt authentic and ſolemn manner; and parliaments have not been more intent on any national concern whatever, than on maintaining this principle, and ſecuring the effects of it.

I ſay,

I ſay, parliaments have been conſtantly thus intent, and eſpecially in the beſt times, during more than three centuries at leaſt; for I would not go back too far, nor grope unneceſſarily in the dark. What elſe did thoſe laws mean, that were made in the time of the Lancaſter kings, to regulate the elections, and to prevent the influence which RICHARD the ſecond had illegally and arbitrarily employed, and which there was room to fear that other princes might employ? What elſe do all thoſe reſolutions, all thoſe declarations, all thoſe remonſtrances, all thoſe acts of parliament mean, that have been made ſo often, and enforced ſo ſtrongly, from time to time, and from thoſe days to theſe, againſt the influence of the crown, either on the elections, or on the members of parliament? I ſhould be aſhamed to aſk any more queſtions of this kind, or to deſcend into any detail, in order to prove what every clerk of a juſtice of peace, nay, almoſt every day-bourer, knows. But there is another queſtion, which I muſt aſk. If this be ſo, what do thoſe men mean, who are employed, or rather, what does he mean who employs them, to plead in all places, and on all occaſions, even the moſt ſolemn, in favor of this very influence, nay, of the very worſt ſort of it, of that influence which is created immediately by corruption; for to that their arguments reach by undeniable conſequences? Reaſon is againſt him and them; ſince it is a plain abſurdity to ſuppoſe a control on the crown, (and they have not yet ventured to ſuppoſe the contrary, that I know of) and to eſtabliſh, at the ſame time, a power, and even a right, in the crown, to render this control uſeleſs. Experience is againſt them; ſince the examples of other countries, and at ſome times (former times I mean) of our own, have proved, that a prince may govern according to his arbitrary will, or that of his more arbitrary miniſter, as abſolutely, and much more ſecurely with, than without the concurrence of a

parliament. Authority, even the uniform authority of our whole legiſlature, is againſt them. The voice of our law gives them the lye. How then ſhall we account for this proceeding; this open and deſperate attack upon our conſtitution, and therefore upon our liberty? Have theſe great men made any nice diſcovery, that eſcaped the blunt ſagacity of our anceſtors formerly, and is above the narrow conceptions of all other men, except themſelves, at this time? Is it leſs fit than the wiſdom of this nation hath judged it to be, for ſo many ages, that kings ſhould govern under the conſtitutional control of two other eſtates? Or is it leſs fit that they ſhould govern ſo, for the time to come, than it was for the time paſt? We ſhall hear, for aught I know, even in this age, that kings are God's vicegerents; that they are, next to him and his ſon Chriſt Jeſus, ſupreme moderators and governors. We ſhall hear again, perhaps, of their hereditary, their divine, their indefeaſable right, and the reſt of that ſilly cant, which was invented to make the uſurpations of prerogative go down the better. But will even this alter the caſe? Will this make it unworthy of them to ſubmit to the full control of ſuch a conſtitution as God himſelf approved, in the inſtitution of the Jewiſh ſenate? MOSES was undoubtedly God's vicegerent. He was, if ever man was ſo, next and immediately under God, a ſupreme moderator and governor. He was * inſpired, and aſſiſted in a ſupernatural manner; and yet he took the advice of his father-in-law JETHRO, the prieſt of Midian. He aſſociated to himſelf in the government of the commonwealth, or he bad the people take, as he ſays in † another place, or chuſe, "wiſe men "and underſtanding, and known among the tribes," that they might be aſſociated to him. He found himſelf unequal to the taſk of governing alone, and he expoſtulated with God upon

* Exod. xviii. † Deut. i.

it.

it. " || I am not able to bear all this people alone. Have I " conceived all this people? Have I begotten them? If thou " deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand." Whether they, who deduce from hence the inſtitution of ſanhedrins, are in the right, or they who aſſign them a more modern date, againſt the opinion of the Jewiſh doctors themſelves, whoſe authority our doctors receive implicitly enough in ſome caſes, and reject as arbitrarily in others, it matters not to enquire. Let us leave the diſpute to the partiſans of JOSEPH SCALIGER and PETAVIUS, of father SIMON and LE CLERC. Thus much is certain. A great ſanhedrin ſubſiſted at Jeruſalem, even at the coming of the Meſſiah, as well as inferior ſanhedrins in ſeveral parts of Paleſtine; which form of government bore ſome reſemblance to our old Saxon conſtitution; and he who takes the trouble of looking into * Mr. SELDEN, will find that the great ſanhedrin had as much authority, and exerciſed as much power, as ever parliaments did, or wittenagemots could claim. That God approved a kind of parliamentary eſtabliſhment, and a diviſion of the ſupreme power between his vicegerent MOSES and the ſeventy elders, to whom he gave ſome of the ſpirit that was on MOSES, the quotations I refer to from holy writ do ſufficiently prove. After this, it cannot be ſaid, I think, to derogate from the majeſty of any prince, let us entertain as high notions of this majeſty as we pleaſe, that he is relieved from the burthen of governing alone; that he is obliged to ſhare the ſupreme power with the nobility and commonalty of the realm; and that he is hindered from deſtroying, either directly or indirectly, that independency of thoſe other eſtates, which can alone preſerve, this diviſion of the ſupreme power, really, as well as apparently. But perhaps theſe great and honeſt men have diſcovered a

|| Numb. xi. * SELD. de Synod. & Praef. Invid. vet. Ebraeorum.

neceſſity

neceſſity of putting the members, or a majority of the members of parliament, under the influence of the crown, in order to preſerve this very conſtitution. Let us ſee therefore what dangers this expedient is fitted to prevent.---Are we afraid that an houſe of commons, unleſs reſtrained by places and penſions, ſhould give up the conſtitution to the lords, and eſtabliſh an ariſtocracy? This fear would be ridiculous ſurely; and he who ſhould argue againſt ſuch a ſuppoſition, would make himſelf ſo---Are we afraid that an houſe of commons, unleſs reſtrained in this manner, ſhould uſurp more power than belongs to them, and eſtabliſh a kind of democratical tyranny? But they would have, in oppoſition to them, a power ſufficient to defeat their deſigns; the united power of the crown, and of the houſe of lords. Formerly, indeed, they ſucceeded in an attempt of this kind; and the king and the lords may, at any time, throw too much power into their ſcale, and ſet the ſenſe and ſpirit of the people on their ſide, as was done at that time. But this neither hath been, nor can be done, unleſs both king and lords conduct themſelves ſo ill, that the miſchiefs to be apprehended from their prevalency appear as great, or greater, than thoſe which are to be apprehended from the prevalency of the commons. Let it be remembered too, that as the king and lords may give too much power and popularity to the commons, ſo the lords and commons may give too much power to the crown. The difference will lie only here; that the king and lords will never do the firſt deſignedly; whereas there is a poſſibility that the lords and commons may be induced, in ſome age leſs virtuous than the preſent, by places, penſions and other gratifications, beſtowed on a majority of thoſe aſſemblies, to do the laſt deſignedly. What now remains to be urged, in favor of this expedient? From what danger are we to be protected by it? Shall we be told that parliaments will

not purſue the national intereſt, unleſs their members are bought into it by the crown? Something like this hath been advanced, I have heard; and nothing more impudent, nor more ſilly could be advanced. A court that is truly in the intereſt of the nation, will have, nay, muſt have a concurrence of parliament, as it would be eaſy, if it was needful, to ſhew. Time and trouble, indeed, may be ſometimes required to lead independent men, who judge for themſelves, and comply becauſe they are convinced; whereas neither one nor the other are wanting, to determine ſuch as hold to a court by a corrupt dependency on it: for they are ſoon diſciplined, and ready to perform the whole exerciſe of parliamentary mercenaries at the beat of a drum. Some inconveniencies may likewiſe ariſe, for that which I have juſt mentioned does not deſerve the name, from the independency of parliaments. Miniſters, for inſtance, may be called to account by the paſſion, by the prejudice, if you will, of ſuch aſſemblies, oftener, perhaps, than they deſerve to be; or their errors may be cenſured, or their faults be puniſhed, in a greater degree, and with more rigor, not only than true political juſtice requires, which ſhould always be tempered with mercy, but even than ſtrict juſtice exacts. But as one of theſe is a fault, if it be a fault, on the beſt ſide, and as the other will certainly happen very ſeldom, it does not ſeem reaſonable, that a door ſhould be opened to corruption and dependency, in order to prevent them. Nay, farther, this vigilance, and this ſeverity of parliaments, which we here ſuppoſe, will not fail to have ſome very good effects, that are more than ſufficient to ballance the ſuppoſed ill effects. Among the reſt, they may render the raſh, who are in power, more cautious, and the bold more modeſt. They may render fools leſs fond of power, and awe even knaves into honeſty. It were better, ſurely, that able and good men ſhould now and then ſuffer, nay, the good

man

man who ſuffered would be himſelf of this opinion, than that the adulation and ſervility of parliaments, which are the neceſſary conſequences of corruption and dependency, ſhould ever contribute to make the court become, in any future age, a ſanctuary for pickpockets, and an hoſpital for changelings.

I am, SIR, &c.

LETTER XVII.

SIR,

THE great alteration we have ſpoken of, in property and power, brought our conſtitution, by ſlow degrees, and through many ſtruggles and dangers, ſo near the moſt perfect idea of a free ſyſtem of government, that nothing would be now wanting to complete it, if effectual means were found of ſecuring the independency of parliament againſt corruption, as well as it is ſecured againſt prerogative. Our kings have loſt little of the gaudy plumage of the crown. Some of their ſuperfluous power, indeed, hath been bought, and more hath been wreſted from them. Notwithſtanding which, it is a very demonſtrable truth, that the crown muſt ſit lighter and more ſecure on the head of a wiſe prince, (and no conſtitution provides for, tho every conſtitution ſhould provide againſt, a weak prince) ſince the great change of property and power in favor of the commons, than ever it did before. Our kings are no longer expoſed, as ſome of the greateſt of them have been, to the inſults of turbulent, ambitious lords, or haughty prelates. It is no longer in the power of a few factious noblemen to draw armies into the field, and oblige their prince to fight for his crown, to fight to gain it, and to fight to keep it; as EDWARD the fourth did, I think, in nine pitched battles. To make the prince uneaſy, or inſecure, as we are now conſtituted, the whole body of the people muſt be uneaſy under his government. A popular king of Great Britain will be always not only eaſy and ſecure, but in effect abſolute. He will be, what the Britiſh conſtitution alone can make any prince, the abſolute monarch of a free people; and this popularity is ſo eaſily acquired, a king gains the public confidence and affection at ſo cheap a rate, that he muſt be

poor

poor indeed in all the kingly virtues, who does not purchaſe them, and eſtabliſh true popularity upon them.

If the condition of our kings is mended in many reſpects, and made worſe in none, that of the nation is mended in every reſpect, by the great improvements of our conſtitution; which are due principally to the change I have mentioned, as the advances we have made in trade, and in national wealth and power, are due principally to theſe improvements. It is by theſe, that the ſubjects of Great Britain enjoy hitherto ſuch a freedom of their perſons, and ſuch a ſecurity of their property, as no other people can boaſt. Hence that great encouragement of induſtry; hence that broad and ſolid foundation of credit, which muſt always continue, unleſs the weight of taxes, and the oppreſſion of tax-gatherers make it worth no man's while to be induſtrious any longer, and unleſs national credit be reduced, by length of time, and private management, to reſt no longer on it's natural and original foundation, but on the feeble props of yearly expedients, and daily tricks; by which a ſyſtem, that ought to be the plaineſt and faireſt imaginable, will become of courſe a dark, intricate, and wicked myſtery of ſtockjobbing.

But the great advantage we are to inſiſt upon here, which hath ariſen to the whole nation from the alteration in the ſtate of property and power, is this: that we have been brought by it to the true poiſe of a mixed government, conſtituted like ours on the three ſimple forms. The democratical power is no longer kept under the ſame dependencies; and if an houſe of commons ſhould now fail to aſſert that independent ſhare in the ſupreme legiſlative power, which the conſtitution aſſigns to this aſſembly, it could not proceed, as it might and ſometimes did formerly, from the nature of tenures, and many other unavoidable reſtraints; it could proceed

ceed alone from the corruption of particular men, who threw themſelves into a voluntary dependency. The democratical power of our conſtitution is not ſufficient to overtop the monarchical and ariſtocratical; but it is ſufficient to counterwork and balance any other power by its own ſtrength, and without the fatal neceſſity of favoring the ambition of the crown againſt the lords, or that of the lords againſt the crown. Nay more, as our government is now conſtituted, the three eſtates have not only one common intereſt, which they always had; but they have, conſidered as eſtates, no ſeparate, contradictory intereſt. Our conſtitution gives ſo much grandeur, ſo much authority and power to the crown, and our parliaments give ſo immenſe a revenue, that no prince hath any real intereſt to deſire more, who looks on himſelf as the ſupreme magiſtrate of a free people; for if we ſuppoſe inordinate ambition, or avarice, to make part of his character, theſe paſſions are inſatiable: but then for this very reaſon, becauſe they are ſo, there ought to be no account held of them; and tho a prince may meaſure his demands, a people, who are in their ſenſes, will never meaſure their conceſſions by them.

The property of the commons is not only become far ſuperior to that of the lords upon the whole, but in the detail there are few, very few, inſtances to be produced of greater ſhares of private property amongſt the latter, than amongſt the former; and as the property of the commons is greater, ſo it is equally free. There are no badges of ſervitude on one ſide; no pretence of any ſuperiority, except thoſe of title and rank, on the other. The peers are, in ſome points, I ſpeak it with all the reſpect due to them, commoners with coronets on their coats of arms; and affecting to act as ſuch, it is plain they deſire very wiſely to be taken for ſuch, on many occaſions. The intereſts of theſe two eſtates then, with regard

regard to property, are the ſame; and their particular rights and privileges are now ſo well aſcertained, and ſo diſtinguiſhed, that as the proximity of their intereſts of one ſort ſhould always unite them, ſo the diſtance of thoſe of another ſort cannot eaſily make them claſh. In ſhort, theſe two orders, according to the preſent conſtitution; (and how different is it from that of Rome, or, in the laſt reſpect, even from that of Spain, not to mention that of France?) have no temptation, and ſcarce the means, of invading each other: ſo that they may the better, and the more effectually, employ their vigilance, and unite their efforts, whenever it ſhall be neceſſary, againſt the encroachments of the crown, from whoſe ſhackles they have both emancipated themſelves, whether the attempts to impoſe theſe ſhackles again are carried on by prerogative, or by the more formidable enemy of liberty, corruption.

It hath been obſerved already, that altho the crown hath the ſole power of creating peers, yet the independency of the peerage on the crown is ſecured by this; that their rights and privileges cannot be taken from them, at the will of the crown. Could the crown unmake, as well as make peers, it would be a jeſt to talk of three eſtates, ſince there would be virtually, and in effect, but two; and therefore our conſtitution hath provided againſt it. But the commons of Great Britain can make, and at proper ſeaſons, and in a proper manner, unmake their repreſentatives; by which means, many inconveniencies and miſchiefs are avoided, and many wiſe and juſt ends obtained. The peers of the realm can, the commons cannot, aſſemble in their collective body, without exceeding thoſe numbers, amongſt whom the quiet, order, decency and ſolemnity of a ſenate may be preſerved. The peers therefore ſit in parliament in their collective, the commons in their repreſentative body. The peers have an inherent, the commons

mons a delegated right. The peers are therefore accountable for their conduct, as all other men are, to God, to their own conſciences, to the tribunal of public fame, and to no other. But the commons are accountable to another tribunal, as well as to theſe, to that of their conſtituents; before which they muſt frequently appear, according to the true intent of our conſtitution, to have a cenſure, or approbation, paſſed on their conduct, by the refuſal, or grant of new powers to the particular members. Thus the collective body of the people of Great Britain delegate, but do not give up, truſt, but do not alienate their right and their power, and cannot be undone by having beggary or ſlavery brought upon them, unleſs they co-operate to their own undoing, and in one word betray themſelves.

We cannot therefore ſubſcribe to thoſe two ſayings of my lord Bacon, which are quoted to this effect; "That England "can never be undone, unleſs by parliaments; and that there "is nothing, which a parliament cannot do."---Great Britain, according to our preſent conſtitution cannot be undone by parliaments; for there is ſomething which a parliament cannot do. A parliament cannot annul the conſtitution; and whilſt that is preſerved, tho our condition may be bad, it cannot be irretrievably ſo. The legiſlative is a ſupreme, and may be called, in one ſenſe, an abſolute, but in none an arbitrary power, * "It is limited to the public good of the "ſociety. It is a power, that hath no other end but preſer-"vation, and therefore can never have a right to deſtroy, "enſlave, or deſignedly to impoveriſh the ſubjects; for the "obligations of the law of nature ceaſe not in ſociety, &c."--- If you therefore put ſo extravagant a caſe, as to ſuppoſe the

* Locke's eſſay on civil government, C. 11. of the extent of the legiſlative power.

two

two houſes of parliament concurring to make at once a formal ceſſion of their own rights and privileges, and of thoſe of the whole nation to the crown, and aſk who hath the right, and the means, to reſiſt the ſupreme legiſlative power? I anſwer, the whole nation hath the right; and a people who deſerve to enjoy liberty, will find the means. An attempt of this kind would break the bargain between the king and the nation, between the repreſentative and collective body of the people, and would diſſolve the conſtitution. From hence it follows, that the nation which hath a right to preſerve this conſtitution, hath a right to reſiſt an attempt, that leaves no other means of preſerving it but thoſe of reſiſtance. From hence it follows, that if the conſtitution was actually diſſolved, as it would be by ſuch an attempt of the three eſtates, the people would return to their original, their natural right, the right of reſtoring the ſame conſtitution, or of making a new one. No power on earth could claim any right of impoſing a conſtitution upon them; and leſs than any that king, thoſe lords, and thoſe commons, who, having been intruſted to preſerve, had deſtroyed the former.-----But to ſuppoſe a caſe more within the bounds of poſſibility, tho one would be tempted to think it as little within thoſe of probability, let us ſuppoſe our parliaments, in ſome future generation, to grow ſo corrupt, and the crown ſo rich, that a pecuniary influence conſtantly prevailing over the majority, they ſhould aſſemble for little elſe than to eſtabliſh grievances, inſtead of redreſſing them; to approve the meaſures of the court, without information; to engage their country in alliances, in treaties, in wars, without examination; and to give money without account, and almoſt without ſtint. The caſe would be deplorable. Our conſtitution itſelf would become our grievance, whilſt this corruption prevailed; and if it prevailed long, our conſtitution could not laſt long; becauſe this ſlow progreſs

would lead to the deſtruction of it as ſurely as the more conciſe method of giving it up at once. But, in this caſe, the conſtitution would help itſelf, and effectually too, unleſs the whole maſs of the people was tainted, and the electors were become no honeſter than the elected. Much time would be required to beggar and enſlave the nation, in this manner. It could ſcarce be the work of one parliament, tho parliaments ſhould continue to be ſeptennial. It could not be the work of a triennial parliament moſt certainly: and the people of Great Britain would have none to blame but themſelves; becauſe, as the conſtitution is a ſure rule of action to thoſe, whom they chuſe to act for them, ſo it is likewiſe a ſure rule of judgment to them, in the choice of their truſtees, and particularly of ſuch as have repreſented them already. In ſhort, nothing can deſtroy the conſtitution of Britain, but the people of Britain: and whenever the people of Britain become ſo degenerate and baſe, as to be induced by corruption, for they are no longer in danger of being awed by prerogative, to chuſe perſons to repreſent them in parliament, whom they have found by experience to be under an influence, ariſing from private intereſt, dependents on a court, and the creatures of a miniſter; or others, who are unknown to the people, that elect them, and bring no recommendation but that which they carry in their purſes; then may the enemies of our conſtitution boaſt that they have got the better of it, and that it is no longer able to preſerve itſelf, nor to defend liberty. Then will that trite, proverbial ſpeech be verified in our caſe, "that the corruptions of the beſt things are the worſt;" for then will that very change in the ſtate of property and power, which improved our conſtitution ſo much, contribute to the deſtruction of it; and we may even wiſh for thoſe little tyrants, the great lords and the great prelates again, to oppoſe the encroachments of the crown. How preferable will

ſubjection to thoſe powerful landlords, (whom the commonalty were accuſtomed to ſerve; and by whom, if they ſuffered on one hand, they had conſiderable advantages on the other) how preferable, indeed, will this ſubjection appear to them, when they ſhall ſee the whole nation oppreſſed by a few upſtarts in power; often by the meaneſt, always by the worſt of their fellow-ſubjects; by men, who owe their elevation and riches neither to merit nor birth, but to the favor of weak princes, and to the ſpoils of their country, beggared by their rapine. Then will the fate of Rome be renewed, in ſome ſort, in Britain. The grandeur of Rome was the work of many centuries, the effect of much wiſdom, and the price of much blood. She maintained her grandeur, whilſt ſhe preſerved her virtue; but when luxury grew up to favor corruption, and corruption to nouriſh luxury, then Rome grew venal; the election of her magiſtrates, the ſentences of her judges, the decrees of her ſenate, all was ſold: for her liberty was ſold when theſe were ſold; and her riches, her power, her glory could not long ſurvive her liberty. She, who had been the envy, as well as the miſtreſs of nations, fell to be an object of their ſcorn, or their pity. They had ſeen and felt that ſhe governed other people by will, and her own by law. They beheld her governed herſelf by will; by the arbitrary will of the worſt of her own citizens, of the worſt of both ſexes, of the worſt of human kind; by CALIGULA, by CLAUDIUS, by NERO, by MESSALINA, by AGRIPPINA, by POPPAEA, by NARCISSUS, by CALISTUS, by PALLAS; by princes that were ſtupid or mad; by women that were abandoned to ambition and to luſt; by miniſters that were emancipated ſlaves, paraſites and pandars, inſolent and rapacious. In this miſerable ſtate, the few that retained ſome ſparks of the old Roman ſpirit, had double cauſe to mourn in private; for it was not ſafe even to mourn in public. They

mourned the loſs of the liberty and grandeur of Rome; and they mourned that both ſhould be ſacrificed to wretches whoſe crimes would have been puniſhed, and whoſe talents would ſcarce have recommended them to the meaneſt offices, in the virtuous and proſperous ages of the commonwealth. Into ſuch a ſtate, the difference of times and of other circumſtances conſidered, at leaſt, into a ſtate as miſerable as this, will the people of Britain both fall, and deſerve to fall, if they ſuffer, under any pretence, or by any hands, that conſtitution to be deſtroyed, which cannot be deſtroyed, unleſs they ſuffer it; unleſs they co-operate with the enemies of it, by renewing an exploded diſtinction of parties; by electing thoſe to repreſent them, who are hired to betray them; or by ſubmitting tamely, when the maſk is taken off, or falls off, and the attempt to bring beggary and ſlavery is avowed, or can be no longer concealed. If ever this happens, the friends of liberty, ſhould any ſuch remain, will have one option ſtill left; and they will rather chuſe, no doubt, to die the laſt of Britiſh freemen, than bear to live the firſt of Britiſh ſlaves.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

SIR,

IF we had propoſed nothing more to ourſelves, in writing this Diſſertation on parties, than the entertainment, ſuch as it is, of your readers, and our own amuſement; we ſhould not have dwelt, perhaps, ſo much on the nature of the Britiſh conſtitution, nor have recurred ſo often to aſſert the neceſſary independency of parliaments on the crown. But we had another motive, which we are neither afraid, nor aſhamed to avow. This neceſſary independency of parliaments, in which the eſſence of our conſtitution, and by conſequence of our liberty conſiſts, ſeems to be in great, not to ſay, in imminent danger of being loſt. They who are alarmed at every thing that is ſaid in favor of our conſtitution, and of Britiſh liberty, and who are prejudiced againſt every man who writes or ſpeaks in defence of them, may take, or affect to take, and try to give offence at this expreſſion. But we deſire to be underſtood, as we have explained our meaning upon ſome former occaſion. We underſtand our conſtitution to be in danger, not only when it is attacked, but as ſoon as a breach is made, by which it may be attacked; and we underſtand this danger to be greater, or leſs, in proportion to the breach that is made, and without any regard to the probability or improbability of an attack. This explanation of our meaning is the better founded, becauſe the nation hath an undoubted right to preſerve the conſtitution not only inviolate, but ſecure from violations. Should corruption prevail among the members, which we truſt will never happen, as notoriouſly as it does in the elections of parliament, we all know how much the magnanimity of our preſent king would ſcorn to take ſo mean an advantage over the nation; how much, on the contrary, his heroical ſpirit would prompt

him to maintain the liberty even of a degenerate people, who might deſerve no longer the enjoyment of ſo invaluable a bleſſing, but who could never deſerve to have it taken from them by a prince of that family, which was raiſed by them to the throne, for no other reaſon but to preſerve it. All this we know; and the nation may have, no doubt, the ſame confidence in every future king of the ſame illuſtrious and royal houſe. But this will not alter the caſe; nor make that, which I call danger, ceaſe to be ſuch. Should angels and arch-angels come down from heaven to govern us, the ſame danger would exiſt, until the ſprings, from whence it ariſes, were cut off; not becauſe ſome angels and arch-angels have fallen, and from being the guardians, have become the tempters and tormentors of mankind, and others therefore may fall; but becauſe, as private liberty cannot be deemed ſecure under a government, wherein law, the proper and ſole ſecurity of it, is dependent on will; ſo public liberty muſt be in danger, whenever a free conſtitution, the proper and ſole ſecurity of it, is dependent on will; and a free conſtitution, like ours, is dependent on will, whenever the will of one eſtate can direct the conduct of all three.

HAVING thus explained what I mean by danger, and taken away all color for cavil, it remains that I prove this danger to be real, and not the phantom of a crazy imagination, or a prejudiced mind. This ſhall be done therefore as ſhortly as I am able, and by an undeniable deduction of facts.

HE who undertakes to govern a free people by corruption, and to lead them by a falſe intereſt, againſt their true intereſt, cannot boaſt the honor of the invention. The expedient is as old as the world, and he can pretend to no other honor than that of being an humble imitator of the devil. To corrupt our parliaments hath been often attempted, as well as to divide our people,

people, in favor of prerogative, and in order to let the arbitrary will of our princes looſe from the reſtraints of law. We obſerved this in ſpeaking of the reign of CHARLES the ſecond: but the efforts then made were ineffectual. The frugal habits of the former age were not intirely loſt in that; which, I preſume, may be reckoned as one cauſe of the noble ſtands that were then made by our parliaments in oppoſition to the court. But not to aſcribe more honor than is due, perhaps, to our fathers, the revenue of the crown was, at that time, ſo ſmall, (I ſpeak comparatively; for, in every other reſpect, it was very ample,) and the profuſion of that prince on his pleaſures was ſo great, that no miniſter of king CHARLES the ſecond could find ſums ſufficient to buy a parliament. He ſtood therefore on his prerogative, ſtrained it as far as he durſt, and made all the uſe of it he could. The revenue of the crown was greatly increaſed in the reign of king JAMES the ſecond, and was given moſt unwiſely for life. I ſay, moſt unwiſely; for as a prince who hath an heart and head to govern well, cannot ſtand in need of ſuch a grant; ſo a prince who hath neither, does not deſerve it: and therefore, whatever the generoſity of our countrymen to their princes may carry them to do at any time, they might leave this undone at all times, without any reflection on their prudence, or even their generoſity. The reign of king JAMES was ſhort; and during this ſhort reign he reſted on that prerogative, which he knew was a cheaper expedient than corruption, and which he vainly flattered himſelf was enough confirmed to ſupport the meaſures he took, for ſubverting the religion, the laws, and the liberty of Britain. Thus were men brought, by the conduct of theſe two princes, to fix their eyes on prerogative, as the ſole inſtrument of tyranny, and to forget that corruption had been employed, tho unſucceſsfully, by king CHARLES, and might have been employed with greater force, and perhaps more ſucceſs, by king

king JAMES. The cry of the nation was for a free parliament, and no man ſeemed to doubt, in that ferment, but that a parliament muſt be free, when the influence which the crown had uſurped in the precedent reigns over the elections, was removed, as it was by the revolution. But this general inadvertency, as well as the particular neglect of thoſe who took the lead in national affairs at that time, is the more ſurpriſing, becauſe corruption having been ſo lately employed, among other means, to render parliaments dependent on the crown, the danger of corruption was, by conſequence, one of thoſe dangers againſt which the nation had a right to be ſecured, as well as a promiſe of being ſo, according to the terms of the prince of ORANGE's declaration. Thoſe perſons eſpecially, who had exclaimed ſo loudly againſt place-men and penſioners, in the reign of king CHARLES, and who complained, at this inſtant, ſo bitterly of the undue influence that had been employed, in ſmall boroughs chiefly, to promote the elections of the parliament which ſat in the reign of king JAMES, ought to have been attentive, one would think, to take the glorious opportunity that was furniſhed them by a new ſettlement of the crown, and of the conſtitution, to ſecure the independency of parliaments effectually for the future. MACHIAVEL obſerves, and makes it the title of one of his diſcourſes, that "a free government, in "order to maintain itſelf free, hath need, every day, of ſome "new proviſions in favor of liberty." The truth of this obſervation, and the reaſons that ſupport it, are obvious. But as every day may not furniſh opportunities of making ſome of thoſe new and neceſſary proviſions, no day that does furniſh the opportunity ought to be neglected. The Romans had been ſo liberal in beſtowing the right of citizens on ſtrangers, that the power of their elections began to fall into ſuch hands as the conſtitution had not intended to truſt with them. QUINTUS FABIUS ſaw the growing evil; and being cenſor, he took the oppor-

opportunity; confined all theſe new electors into four tribes; put it out of their power to turn the elections, as they had done, whilſt their numbers were divided among all the tribes; freed his country from this danger; reſtored the conſtitution, according to the true intent and meaning of it; and obtained, by univerſal ſuffrage, the title of MAXIMUS. If a ſpirit like this had prevailed among us, at the time we ſpeak of, ſomething like this would have been done: and ſurely ſomething like it ought to have been done; for the revolution was, in many inſtances, and it ought to have been ſo in all, one of thoſe renewals of our conſtitution that we have often mentioned. If it had been ſuch, with reſpect to the elections of members to ſerve in parliament, theſe elections might have been drawn back to the antient principle on which they had been eſtabliſhed; and the rule of property, which was followed antiently, and was perverted by innumerable changes that length of time produced, might have been reſtored; by which the communities to whom the right of electing was truſted, as well as the qualifications of the electors and the elected, might have been ſettled in proportion to the preſent ſtate of things. Such a remedy might have wrought a radical cure of the evil that threatens our conſtitution; whereas it is much to be apprehended, even from experience, that all others are merely palliative; and yet the palliative muſt be employed, no doubt, till the ſpecific can be procured.

BUT nothing of this kind was done at the revolution. Pleaſed that the open attacks on our conſtitution were defeated and prevented, men entertained no thought of the ſecret attacks that might be carried on againſt the independency of parliaments; as if our dangers could be but of one kind, and could ariſe but from one family. Soon after the revolution, indeed, men of all ſides, and of all denominations, (for it was not a

party-cauſe, tho it was endeavored to be made ſuch) began to perceive not only that nothing effectual had been done to hinder the undue influence of the crown in elections, and an over-balance of the creatures of the court in parliament, but that the means of exerciſing ſuch an influence, at the will of the crown, were unawares and inſenſibly increaſed, and every day increaſing. In a word, they began to ſee that the foundations were laid of giving as great power to the crown indirectly, as the prerogative, which they had formerly dreaded ſo much, could give directly, and of eſtabliſhing univerſal corruption. The firſt hath happened, and we pray that the laſt never may.

The net revenue of the crown, at the abdication of king James, amounted to ſomewhat more than two millions, without any tax on land, or malt, and without a multitude of grievous impoſitions and exciſes, that have been ſince heaped on the nation. It is plain, and it was ſo then, that this revenue might have been ſo increaſed, as to anſwer annually the great annual expences, in which we engaged ſoon afterwards. In this caſe, the people would not have had a greater, nay nor ſo great a burthen to bear, as they had in the courſe of the two wars that followed; and, at the end of theſe wars, they would have found themſelves with little or no load upon them, inſtead of crouching under a debt of fifty millions. That this method was not taken, furniſhes matter of very melancholy reflection to the preſent, and will do ſo to future generations. But theſe reflections are no part of my ſubject. How it came to paſs that a method ſo practicable, and ſo eligible, was not taken, (whether this was owing to private intereſt, to party-cunning of different and oppoſite kinds, or to an unhappy refinement in politics, that contracting national debts, under a new eſtabliſhment, was an effectual expedient

to

to attach men to this eſtabliſhment) I ſhall not preſume to ſay. All three might have their ſhare, perhaps, in determining for another meaſure. At leaſt it is a point, on which the men of that time have ſpoken with much prejudice, and little candor. But however that might be, certain it is that we began to borrow at high intereſt, to anticipate and mortgage, immediately after the revolution: and having once begun, there was no remedy; we were forced to proceed in the ſame manner, thro the courſe of two mighty wars. Formerly, the whole expence of the ſtate was born by the crown; and when this expence grew, upon extraordinary occaſions, too great for the revenue of the crown to bear, the people aided the crown, if they approved the occaſions of the expence. Theſe grants were properly aids, no more: for the revenue of the crown was engaged in the firſt place, and therefore it might ſeem reaſonable that the crown ſhould have the levying and management of the whole; of theſe aids, as well as of the ſtanding revenue. But it happened in this caſe, as it does in many; the reaſon of the thing ceaſed, and the thing continued. A ſeparate, private revenue, or a civil-liſt, as we commonly call it, was aſſigned to the crown. From that time, the former order hath been reverſed. Our kings, inſtead of contributing moſt, have contributed nothing to the public charge; and the people of Britain, inſtead of giving occaſionally aids to the crown, have taken upon themſelves the whole load of ordinary and extraordinary expences, for which they annually provide. Notwithſtanding this vaſt alteration in the ſtate of the revenue, and the intereſt of the king and the people in the management of it, the ſame forms of granting aids to the crown, and of levying taxes, and of managing the public treaſure, have been continued: ſo that the people ſtand obliged (for the crown, that is truſted with the whole, is bound for nothing) to make good all deficiencies,

tho they have no ſhare in the management of the revenue. Our kings, ſince the eſtabliſhment of the civil-liſt, have not only a private and ſeparate eſtate, but receive a kind of rent-charge out of the public eſtate, to maintain their honor and dignity, nothing elſe: and whether the public eſtate thrive, or not, this rent-charge muſt be made good to them; at leaſt, as it hath been ſettled on our preſent moſt gracious monarch, if the funds appropriated produce the double of that immenſe revenue of eight hundred thouſand pounds a year, which hath been ſo liberally given him for life, the whole is his, without account; but if they fail in any degree to produce it, the intire national fund is engaged to make up the difference. But altho our kings have thus no longer any immediate intereſt in the public eſtate, they are truſted with the intire management of it. They are not only ſtewards for the public, but they condeſcend to be ſuch for all thoſe private perſons, who are the creditors of the public, and have the additional trouble of managing about three millions a year, on this head.

Now this new ſettlement, which appears abſurd in ſpeculation, how wiſe ſoever it may have been thought contrived for practice, hath had this evident and inevitable conſequence. As we have annually increaſed our funds, and our taxes, we have annually increaſed the power of the crown; and theſe funds and taxes being eſtabliſhed and laid for perpetuity, or for terms equivalent to perpetuity, in the ſenſe here intended, this increaſe of power muſt not only continue, but ſtill increaſe, as long as the ſyſtem of oeconomy ſubſiſts. How this increaſe of power ariſes from the increaſe of funds and taxes, and the influence of the crown grows, in proportion to the burthen on the people, heavier, hath been explained ſo much in the debates on a late deteſtable occaſion, that much leſs needs to be ſaid on the ſubject here. If we conſider, in the

increaſe

increaſe of taxes, nothing more than the increaſe of officers firſt, by which a vaſt number of new dependents on the crown are created in every part of the kingdom; (dependents as numerous, and certainly more prevalent than all the tenants and wards of the crown were anciently;) and ſecondly, the powers given to the treaſury, and other inferior officers, on account of theſe taxes, which are at leaſt as great and as grievous, in this free government of ours, as any that are exerciſed in the moſt arbitrary government, on the ſame occaſions; if we conſider this alone, we ſhall find reaſon ſufficient to conclude, that altho the power of prerogative was more open, and more noiſy in it's operations, yet the power thus acquired is more real and may prove more dangerous for this very reaſon, becauſe it is more covered, and more ſilent. That men began to ſee, very ſoon after the revolution, the danger ariſing from hence to our conſtitution, as I ſaid above, is moſt certain. No leſs than ſeven acts were made, in king WILLIAM's reign, to prevent undue influences on elections; and one of the acts, as I remember, for I have it not before me, is grounded on this fact, * "that the officers of the exciſe had frequently, by "threats and promiſes, prevailed on electors, and abſolutely de-"barred them of the freedom of voting." What hath been done, or attempted to be done, ſince that time, in the ſame view, and what hath been done, or attempted to be done, both in the reign of king WILLIAM and ſince, to prevent an undue influence on the elected, as well as on the electors, I need not recapitulate. They are matters of freſh date, and enough known. Upon the whole, this change in the ſtate and property of the public revenue hath made a change in our conſtitution, not yet perhaps attended to ſufficiently, but ſuch an one however as deſerves our utmoſt attention, ſince it gives a

* Tertio GUL. & MAR.

power, unknown in former times, to one of the three eſtates; and ſince public liberty is not guarded againſt the dangers that may ariſe from this power, as it was, and as it is now more than ever, againſt the dangers that uſed to ariſe from the powers formerly poſſeſſed or claimed by the crown. Formerly, prerogative was kept in ſight, and proviſions were made againſt the effects and encroachments of it, as often as occaſion required, and opportunity offered. They who called themſelves friends to the government, in thoſe days, oppoſed theſe proviſions. They who were friends to the conſtitution, promoted them. That the ſame thing ſhould happen again, in a ſimilar caſe, we muſt expect. But as the friends of the conſtitution, in times paſt, were not deterred, tempted, nor wearied, whilſt they defended it againſt dangers of one kind, and by their honeſt perſeverance delivered it down, not only ſafe, but more improved, to poſterity; let us flatter ourſelves with this agreeable hope, that the friends of the conſtitution, at this time, and in all times to come, will be neither deterred, tempted, nor wearied in the ſame generous cauſe, in watching and guarding it againſt dangers of another kind; and that they will deliver it down, in like manner, to future generations. Sure I am there are reaſons, and thoſe of no ſmall moment, why they ſhould be more watchful, more upon their guard, more bold, and more inceſſant in their endeavors, if poſſible, even than the aſſertors of Britiſh liberty were formerly; and the enumeration of ſome of theſe reaſons is an article not to be omitted on this occaſion.

I am, SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

SIR,

AS the means then of influencing by prerogative, and of governing by force, were conſidered to be increaſed formerly, upon every increaſe of power to the crown, ſo are the means of influencing by money, and of governing by corruption, to be conſidered as increaſed now, upon that increaſe of power which hath accrued to the crown by the new conſtitution of the revenue ſince the revolution. Nay farther. Not only the means of corrupting are increaſed, on the part of the crown, but the facility of employing theſe means with ſucceſs is increaſed, on the part of the people, on the part of the electors, and of the elected. Nay, farther ſtill. Theſe means and this facility are not only increaſed, but the power of the crown to corrupt, as I have hinted already, and the proneneſs of the people to be corrupted, muſt continue to increaſe on the ſame principles, unleſs a ſtop be put to the growing wealth and power of one, and the growing depravity of the other. We are, to be ſure, in no danger from any advantage his majeſty will take of this ſituation; but if advantage be not taken in favor of our conſtitution, of the preſent moſt happy reign, of the mild and beneficent temper of our heroical monarch, of the generous principle, inſtilled by nature, and improved by philoſophy, of his royal conſort, it may be ſuppoſed, for we ſpeak hypothetically all along, as the reader will pleaſe to remember, even where the precaution is not uſed; it may be ſuppoſed, I ſay, that pretended friends to the government, and real enemies to this conſtitution, no matter whether they are ſuch by principle, or become ſuch by their crimes, will get into ſuperior power, in ſome future time, and under ſome weak or wicked prince: and

and whenever this happens, the ſubverſion of our conſtitution, and of our liberty by conſequence, will be the moſt eaſy enterprize imaginable; becauſe nothing can be more eaſy than the creation of an anti-conſtitutional dependency of the two houſes of parliament on the crown will be in that caſe; and becauſe ſuch a dependency of the two houſes is as real a ſubverſion of our conſtitution as an abſolute aboliſhment of parliaments would be.

THE firſt of thoſe means of corruption, that have grown up, or been increaſed, ſince the revolution, which I ſhall mention, is the eſtabliſhment of the civil-liſt; not ſo much on account of the manner in which it was originally given, as on account of that in which it hath been ſince given, and of the vaſt augmentations that have been made to it; augmentations, that may be doubled or trebled, in times to come, upon the ſame motives, under the ſame and other pretences; in ſhort, juſt as ſpeciouſly as they have been made. The revenue of king JAMES the ſecond, as it ſtood at his abdication, hath been mentioned; and it would not be hard to ſhew, by indiſputable computations, that they who apprehended he might be able to govern without parliaments, or to buy parliaments, if he wanted their aſſiſtance, had good reaſon for ſuch apprehenſions, notwithſtanding the expence he was at, over and above all the ordinary charges of the government, in maintaining againſt law a great ſtanding army of ſixteen or eighteen thouſand men.-----But to go back to the reign of king CHARLES the ſecond, whoſe revenue was much leſs. The patriots of that age, even when this revenue was computed at no more than one million two hundred thouſand pounds a year, took great alarm at the pecuniary influence it might create, and looked upon it, and ſpoke of it, as a fund for corruption. Now, if this revenue could afford a fund for

for corruption, when, beſides maintaining the honor and dignity of the crown, it was to defray all the other expences of the ſtate, and among the reſt, thoſe of a ſmall army, and a great fleet; what would the ſame patriots think of a revenue of eight hundred thouſand pounds, or a million a year, applicable to the particular expences of the crown alone, and not one farthing of which ſacred treaſure was ever diverted to any national uſe? They would have the ſame juſt confidence, no doubt, as we have in his preſent majeſty; but they would ſay as we do, that ſo immenſe a private, or ſeparate revenue, may become hereafter an inexhauſtible fund of corruption: and therefore that the independency of parliaments is, and muſt be in real danger, till ſome remedies, as effectual againſt the pecuniary influence, as have been found againſt the prerogative of the crown, are provided. They would ſhew that a ſmall ſum, in aid of places and penſions, of fears and expectations, might ſerve for the ordinary charge of annual corruption; and that a ſmall ſaving reſerved every year might produce, at the end of ſeven, a fund ſufficient for the extraordinary charge of ſeptennial and national corruption.

But again. If we ſuppoſe the civil liſt to become an inſufficient fund for theſe purpoſes, by the profuſion of ſome future king, (and nothing leſs than the moſt extravagant profuſion can make it ſo;) or if we ſuppoſe that ſome future king may join to ſo many ill qualities, as leave him no means of governing but by corruption, a ſordid avarice, that renders him unable to open his coffers, even for this uſe; yet will a very little iniquitous cunning ſuffice to create funds for corruption, that may come in aid of the civil liſt. It is natural for men to be leſs frugal, when others are to pay for their want of frugality. Our kings therefore may become more apt to

take, and our miniſters to adviſe ſuch engagements, as plunge the nation, at every turn, into vaſt expence, ſince the load which fell, in part at leaſt, on the crown formerly, falls intire on the people now. But beſides this general reaſon to promote a want of frugality, there may ariſe particular reaſons, of more poſitive and more pernicious effect. A weak adminiſtration, for inſtance, may pretend public neceſſity, when private inability alone hath formed the conjuncture; and frequent and extravagant ſupplies may be aſked and obtained, to do, or to undo, by the weight of money, what might have been attained, or prevented, by a little foreſight, and by a prudent conduct. A wicked adminiſtration may propoſe to impoveriſh the people; to render them as ſubmiſſive and as abject as the ſubjects, the boors, or the ſlaves, in ſome foreign countries, and to beggar them out of their ſturdineſs. But there is another view, that may be common to a weak and a wicked adminiſtration both. In ſuch an age as we ſuppoſe, public money will be eaſily granted, and public accounts rarely, or incuriouſly inſpected. The miniſters therefore, tho never ſo weak, may be impudent enough to aſk, and able enough to get frequent ſupplies, on national pretences, for private purpoſes. The conſequences of this are manifold; for, in general, the more money paſſes through their hands, the more opportunities they have of gain; and, in particular, they may ſhare, if they pleaſe, in every bad bargain they make for the public; and the worſe their bargain, the better their ſhare will be. Thus an immenſe ſubſidy given to ſome little prince, who deals in ſoldiers, or an immenſe arrear ſtated in favor of theſe little merchants of human fleſh, may be ſo ordered as to ſteal enough from the public to repleniſh the royal coffers, to glut the miniſters, to feed ſome of their hungry creatures, and to bribe a parliament beſides. Several of theſe occaſional jobbs may be, and, no doubt, will be contrived, in ſuch an age, and by ſuch means as we here ſuppoſe, and may be

be juſtly reckoned as ſo many auxiliary funds, belonging to the great aggregate fund of corruption. Let us, however, break off from diſcourſing of theſe, which may be more eaſily and more frequently contrived under the preſent, but might have been contrived under the former conſtitution of the revenue; and let us turn our diſcourſe, to ſpeak of that great ſource of corruption, which was opened ſoon after the revolution; which was unknown before it; and which hath ſpread, ſince it was opened, like the box of PANDORA, innumerable evils over this unhappy country.

THE increaſe and continuance of taxes acquire to the crown, by multiplying officers of the revenue, and by arming them with formidable powers againſt the reſt of their fellow-ſubjects, a degree of power, the weight of which the inferior ranks of our people have long felt, and they moſt, who are moſt uſeful to the commonwealth, and which even the ſuperior ranks may feel one time or other; for I preſume it would not be difficult to ſhew how a full exerciſe of the powers that are in being, with, or even without ſome little additions to them, for the improvement of the revenue, that ſtale pretence for oppreſſion, might oblige the greateſt lord in the land to bow as low to a commiſſioner of the cuſtoms, or exciſe, or to ſome ſubaltern harpy, as any nobleman or gentleman in France can be obliged to bow to the intendant of his province. But the eſtabliſhment of public funds, on the credit of theſe taxes, hath been productive of more and greater miſchiefs than the taxes themſelves, not only by increaſing the means of corruption, and the power of the crown, but by the effect it hath had on the ſpirit of the nation, on our manners, and our morals. It is impoſſible to look back, without grief, on the neceſſary and unavoidable conſequences of this eſtabliſhment; or without indignation on that myſtery of iniquity, to which this

eſtabliſhment gave occaſion, which hath been raiſed upon it, and carried on, for almoſt half a century, by means of it. It is impoſſible to look forward, without horror, on the conſequences that may ſtill follow. The ordinary expences of our government are defrayed, in great meaſure, by anticipations and mortgages. In times of peace, in days of proſperity, as we boaſt them to be, we contract new debts, and we create new funds. What muſt we do in war, and in national diſtreſs? What will happen, when we have mortgaged and funded all we have to mortgage and to fund; when we have mortgaged to new creditors that ſinking fund which was mortgaged to other creditors not yet paid off; when we have mortgaged all the product of our land, and even our land itſelf? Who can anſwer, that when we come to ſuch extremities, or have them more nearly in proſpect, ten millions of people will bear any longer to be hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to maintain the two hundredth part of that number at eaſe, and in plenty? Who can anſwer, that the whole body of the people will ſuffer themſelves to be treated, in favor of an handful of men, (for they who monopolize the whole power, and may in time monopolize the whole property of the funds, are, indeed but an handful,) who can anſwer, that the whole body of the people will ſuffer themſelves to be treated, in favor of ſuch an handful, as the poor Indians are, in favor of the Spaniards; to be parcelled out in lots, as it were; and to be aſſigned, like theſe Indians to the Spaniſh planters, to toil and ſtarve for the proprietors of the ſeveral funds? Who can anſwer, that a ſcheme, which oppreſſes the farmer, ruins the manufacturer, breaks the merchant, diſcourages induſtry, and reduces fraud into ſyſtem; which beggars ſo often the fair adventurer and innocent proprietor; which drains continually a portion of our national wealth away to foreigners, and draws moſt perniciouſly the reſt of that immenſe property that was

diffuſed among thouſands, into the pockets of a few; who can anſwer that ſuch a ſcheme will be always endured? ------But I have run, before I was aware, from my ſubject, which requires no more than that I ſhould take notice of the eſtabliſhment of the public funds, as it furniſhes new means of corruption on the part of the crown, and new facilities to theſe means, on the part of the people.

Now this, I ſuppoſe, hath need of no proof, and of little explanation; for, firſt, the whole art of ſtockjobbing, the whole myſtery of iniquity mentioned above, ariſes from this eſtabliſhment, and is employed about the funds; and, ſecondly, the main ſprings that turn, or may turn, the artificial wheel of credit, and make the paper eſtates that are faſtened to it, riſe or fall, lurk behind the veil of the treaſury. From hence it follows, that if this office ſhould be ever unrighteouſly adminiſtered; if there ſhould ever be at the head of it, one of thoſe veteran ſharpers, who hath learned by experience how to improve the folly, and aggravate the misfortunes of his fellow ſubjects, of the innocent, of the poor, of the widow, and of the orphan, to his own, or any other private advantage; it follows, I ſay, that he muſt have it in his power, and there can be no doubt of his will, to employ two methods of corruption, without any incumbrance to the civil liſt. Such a miniſterial jobber may employ the opportunities of gaining on the funds, that he can frequently create, by a thouſand various artifices, (notwithſtanding the excellent proviſions that have been lately made againſt the infamous practice of ſtockjobbing, by the wiſdom of the legiſlature, and which we promiſe ourſelves will be ſtill improved) and he may apply the gains that are thus made, to corruption, in aid of the civil liſt. He may corrupt men with their own ſpoils, and bribe even thoſe whom he reduced by his clandeſtine practices

practices to that penury which could alone make them capable of being bribed; or, when he hath to do with men of another character, (for no rank alone will be ſufficient to raiſe them, in ſuch an age, above the moſt direct and proſtitute corruption;) he may bribe them by a whiſper, initiate them into his myſtery to gain them, and then ſecure them by a participation of the ſame fraud and the ſame profit.

Tho this reaſoning be hypothetical, yet the ſuppoſitions are not ſtrained, nor unnatural; for as the meaneſt grubs on earth have raiſed themſelves by ſtockjobbing to the rank and port of noblemen and gentlemen; ſo may noblemen and gentlemen debaſe themſelves to their meanneſs, and acquire the ſame ſpirit, by following the ſame trade. That luxury which began to ſpread after the reſtoration of king Charles the ſecond, hath increaſed ever ſince; hath deſcended from the higheſt to the loweſt ranks of our people, and is become national. Now nothing can be more certain than this, that national luxury and national poverty may, in time, eſtabliſh national proſtitution. Beſides this, it is to be conſidered, that the immenſe wealth of particular men is a circumſtance which always attends national poverty, and is in a great meaſure the cauſe of it. We may apply already to our country thus much at leaſt of that which Salust makes Cato ſay of the ſtate of Rome; and I wiſh we could apply no more,-----"Habemus luxuriam, "atque avaritiam; publicè egeſtatem, privatim opulentiam; "luxury and avarice, public want and private wealth "abound." Now, as public want, or general poverty, for in that ſenſe I take it here, will lay numbers of men open to the attacks of corruption; ſo private wealth will have the ſame effect, eſpecially where luxury prevails, on ſome of thoſe who do not feel the public want; for there is imaginary as well as real poverty. He who thought himſelf rich before, may

may begin to think himſelf poor, when he compares his wealth, and the expence he is able to make, with thoſe men whom he hath been uſed to eſteem, and perhaps juſtly, far inferior to himſelf in all reſpects. He who would have been aſhamed to participate in fraud, or to yield to corruption, may begin to think the fault venial, when he ſees men who were far below him, riſe above him by fraud and by corruption; when he ſees them maintain themſelves by theſe means in an elevation which they could not have acquired by the contrary virtues, if they had had them. Thus may contraries unite in their effect, and poverty and wealth combine to facilitate the means and the progreſs of corruption. Thus may the great thieves of the nation do more, and leſs reparable miſchief, by the practices they introduce and the examples they ſet, than by the actual robberies they commit. "Pluſque exemplo quàm peccato nocent," to uſe an expreſſion of TULLY, in one of his books of laws.

MUCH more might be ſaid, concerning the increaſe of power which the crown hath acquired, and muſt continue to acquire, according to the preſent conſtitution and management of the revenue. Much more might be ſaid to ſhew that the power of money, as the world is now conſtituted, is real power, and that all power, without this, is imaginary; that the prince who gets prerogative alone, gets a phantom; but that he who gets money, even without prerogative, gets ſomething real, and will be as much ſtronger than his neighbours, and his people too, as he hath a greater command of money. In fine, a great deal more might be ſaid to ſhew how much corruption is a more deadly weapon than the higheſt prerogative, in the hands of men who are enemies to ſuch a conſtitution of government as ours is.----But I haſten to a concluſion.

If then a ſpirit of rapine and venality, of fraud and corruption, continue to diffuſe themſelves, not only luxury and avarice, but every kind of immorality will follow; and the whole may be improved by ſuch ways as have been ſketched out, and by others, whenever the nation falls under a bad government, till the prince on the throne ſhall not be able to ſay, ſpeaking of his whole people, even that which Philip the ſecond ſaid, ſpeaking of the corruption of his own court; "They all take money, except Myself and Sapena." Britain will then be in that very condition in which, and in which alone, her conſtitution, and her liberty by conſequence, may be deſtroyed; becauſe the people may, in a ſtate of univerſal corruption, and will in no other, either ſuffer others to betray them, or betray themſelves. How near a progreſs we have made towards this ſtate, I determine not. This I ſay; it is time for every man, who is deſirous to preſerve the Britiſh conſtitution, and to preſerve it ſecure, to contribute all he can to prevent the ill effects of that new influence and power which have gained ſtrength in every reign ſince the revolution; of thoſe means of corruption that may be employed, one time or other on the part of the crown, and of that proneneſs to corruption on the part of the people, that hath been long growing, and ſtill grows. It may otherwiſe happen, that theſe cauſes remaining in force, their effects will become too ſtrong to be checked, and will enſure the ruin of the beſt conſtitution upon earth, whenever the men in power ſhall think their grandeur or their ſafety concerned in the ruin of it. We are not expoſed at preſent, moſt certainly, to any ſuch contingency; but the bare poſſibility of being ſo is a reaſon ſufficient to awaken and alarm every honeſt man. Hath not every ſuch man, indeed, reaſon to be alarmed, when he hears the cauſe of corruption publickly pleaded, and when men are ſuffered, nay paid by ſomebody or other, to plead this

this unrighteous cauſe, as if it was that of our moſt righteous government. Had we lived when the ſtar-chamber tyrannized, and many other extravagant powers were exerciſed, under the authority of the crown, we ſhould have found fault as much as we dared, no doubt, and yet have waited patiently, perhaps, for ſome favorable opportunity of redreſſing the grievances. But when we heard theſe acts of power juſtified as legal and conſtitutional, and the prerogative, by virtue of which they were done, claimed as a right in the crown, we ſhould have taken the alarm, I preſume, as hot as our predeceſſors did. Thus, in the caſe now before us, corruption may have been practiſed in ſome degree, perhaps, at all times. But then it hath been always kept under by the ſhame and danger, that attended both the corrupter and the corrupted. It hath been always complained of, never defended, and endeavors have been uſed, from time to time, with general applauſe, to prevent it. But according to the principles now avowed, theſe endeavors were unjuſt; they ought to be repented of; and the acts made in conſequence of them ought to be repealed: for the conſtitutional independency of the crown cannot be ſupported, unleſs the crown have the right and the means of taking their independency from the other parts of the legiſlature, by keeping the members of thoſe aſſemblies under a pecuniary influence. Let no man think that the abſurdity and profligacy of theſe doctrines ſecure us againſt the effect of them. They may ſoon grow into vogue, and be reputed as ſacred truths as any of thoſe falſhoods, that are eſtabliſhed by the ſyſtems of policy and religion, in many other countries. What can be too abſurd, or too profligate, for an abſurd and profligate, or for a ſuperſtitious people?

But if we ſhould apprehend the effects of theſe doctrines as little as we eſteem the doctors who preach them, yet ſtill

the alarm is given by them, and it would be ſtupidity, or ſomewhat much worſe than ſtupidity, not to take it. We deſpiſe the drummers and trumpeters of an enemy's army; (for I reſume the alluſion that I applied in the firſt of theſe diſcourſes;) but when we hear the noiſe of their drums and trumpets, we take the alarm, and conclude the enemy is near. The friends of our conſtitution therefore are in the right to join iſſue upon this point with the enemies of it, and to fix upon this principal and real diſtinction and difference, the preſent diviſion of parties; ſince parties we muſt have; and ſince thoſe which ſubſiſted formerly are quite extinguiſhed, notwithſtanding all the wicked endeavors of ſome men, who can have no merit but party-merit, nor ſafety but in faction, to revive them. If there was merit, and ſurely there was great merit, in oppoſing the aſſertors of prerogative formerly, when it roſe ſo high as to endanger our liberty; there is great merit in oppoſing the aſſertors of corruption now, and in expoſing the means by which this expedient may be improved to the ruin of our conſtitution, and therefore of our liberty. Nay, the merit is greater in ſome reſpects, if corruption be in itſelf, in it's own nature, and in the preſent circumſtances of the nation, and diſpoſitions of the people, more dangerous than prerogative ever was; and if the means of eſtabliſhing a government of arbitrary will, by corruption, be more likely to prove effectual than thoſe of doing it by prerogative ever were. That it ſhould ever become harder to ſave our country from the effects of corruption, than it was to defeat the efforts of prerogative, God forbid.---- On the whole matter, a Diſſertation upon parties could not wind itſelf up more properly, we think, than by ſhewing that the Britiſh conſtitution of government deſerves, above all others, the conſtant attention, and care to maintain it, of the people who are ſo happy as to live under it; that it may be weakened

for

for want of attention, which is a degree of danger; but that it cannot be deſtroyed, unleſs the peers and the commons, that is, the whole body of the people, unite to deſtroy it, which is a degree of madneſs, and ſuch a monſtrous iniquity, as nothing but confirmed and univerſal corruption can produce; that ſince the time, when all our dangers from prerogative ceaſed, new dangers to this conſtitution, more ſilent and leſs obſerved, are ariſen; and, finally, that as nothing can be more ridiculous than to preſerve the nominal diviſion of whig and tory parties, which ſubſiſted before the revolution, when the difference of principles, that could alone make the diſtinction real, exiſts no longer; ſo nothing can be more reaſonable than to admit the nominal diviſion of conſtitutioniſts and anti-conſtitutioniſts, or of a court and a country-party, at this time, when an avowed difference of principles makes this diſtinction real. That this diſtinction is real cannot be denied, as long as there are men amongſt us, who argue for, and who promote even a corrupt dependency of the members of the two houſes of parliament on the crown; and others who maintain that ſuch a dependency of the members takes away the conſtitutional independency of the two houſes, and that this independency loſt, our conſtitution is a dead letter, and we ſhall be only in a worſe condition by preſerving the forms of it.

To reduce therefore our preſent parties to this ſingle diviſion, our preſent diſputes to this ſingle conteſt, and to fix our principal attention on this object of danger, too long and too much neglected, hath been and is the ſole deſign of theſe diſcourſes. The deſign may have been inſufficiently executed, but it is honeſt; but it is of the laſt importance; and whatever the enemies of our conſtitution, who call themſelves the friends of the government, may ſay, to amuſe and impoſe on the weak, ignorant, and trifling part of mankind, the impor-

ance of it will be felt every day, and every hour, more and more, till it be felt by every man in Britain. Let us hope, and endeavor by all poſſible means, that it may not be felt too late; and to encourage the conſtitutioniſts, or country-party, in this attempt, let us conſider from whom an oppoſition to it is to be expected.------Shall it be expected then from thoſe, who have paſſed under the denomination of tories? Certainly not. They feel as much as any men in Britain, the preference that ought to be given to that ſyſtem of government which was eſtabliſhed by the revolution, and in which they took ſo great a ſhare, and ſhew themſelves as ready to render that great work, which was left and ſtill continues imperfect, complete.-----Shall this oppoſition be expected from the diſſenters? It cannot be. Shall they, who pretend to greater purity than others, become the advocates of corruption? Shall they contribute their endeavors to undermine the beſt conſtitution of government they can hope to enjoy, unleſs they hope to riſe on the ruins of it, and to form another on their own model? As religious ſects, they deſerve indulgence, and they have it; but they are too wiſe not to ſee that, as a faction in the ſtate, they would deſerve none.------In fine, ſhall this oppoſition be expected from thoſe who have been called whigs? That too is impoſſible. Their predeceſſors aſſerted the independency of parliaments, and ſtruggled hard againſt corruption, in former reigns. When the reſt of mankind embrace the ſame principles, and purſue the ſame ends, ſhall they renounce one, and run counter to the other? Shall they own themſelves againſt one method of deſtroying our conſtitution, but for another? Againſt making kings independent on parliaments by prerogative, but for making parliaments dependent on kings by corruption? Shall they give the enemies of the revolution a plauſible pretence to ſay that nothing more was meant by them at leaſt, than a change of government, in which they hoped to find their particular and

party account? This would be to caſt black and odious colors on the revolution, indeed; more black, and more odious than any than it was in the power of a * vain, forward, turbulent preacher to caſt, by his frothy declamations. But the whigs are ſo far from oppoſing the endeavors to preſerve our conſtitution, that they co-operate to promote the ſucceſs of them; and that, however perſonal prejudices, perſonal partialities, and old habits, that are daily wearing off, may be ſtill entertained by ſome amongſt them, all the independent men, who paſs under that name, unite in the common cauſe of liberty and their country.-----It remains therefore that no national party can be formed in oppoſition to thoſe, who endeavor to ſecure the independency of parliaments againſt the new influence of the crown, and againſt corruption; nor any ſtrength be exerted, except that of a faction, compoſed of the refuſe of all parties, gleaned up by one who hath none for him.-----I would willingly carry this farther; and, in doing ſo, I ſhall not advance a paradox, unleſs it be ſuppoſed, which I think would be a greater paradox, that a man may have abilities to deſtroy the conſtitution, and yet not ſenſe enough to ſee his remote, as well as immediate, his family, as well as perſonal intereſt. I ſay then, that if a deſign of raiſing the power of the crown above any pitch of prerogative, and of reducing parliaments to an abſolute dependency, as well as a faction to ſupport this deſign, be formed; the very man who forms ſuch a deſign, and ſuch a faction, muſt be infatuated, if he can wiſh very ſincerely his own ſucceſs. His firſt deſign, we are ſure, will be that of raiſing a great family, and heaping upon it riches and honors. Shall his ſecond deſign be that of rendering theſe riches and honors precarious and inſecure, and of entailing ſervitude on his own race; for it will be impoſſible to exempt them from the common calamity? No-

* Doctor Sacheverel.

thing

thing but deſpair, that is fear void of hope, ariſing from a conſciouſneſs of guilt, can drive any man into ſuch a deſign. But, in this caſe, there will be fear oppoſed to fear, and one of theſe fears may be allayed by hope. The fear of being called to a ſevere account may be mitigated by the hope of eſcaping. Where is the inſolent, rapacious, odious miniſter, that may not entertain ſome hope, as well as fear, when he ſets before his eyes the examples of thoſe who have gone before him? PALLAS was the favorite of AGRIPPINA. He governed like the maſter of the empire, and ſupported her pride and ambition by his counſels and ſervices, as he had been raiſed to power and was maintained in it by her credit, whilſt her credit laſted. * NERO diſmiſſed him; and ſeeing him go from court with a croud at his heels, ſaid pleaſantly enough, as if it had been ſpoken of a dictator, that he went to abdicate. But PALLAS carried off the ſpoils of the empire with him; all ſcores were quitted between him and the public; and, according to the bargain he had made, he was called to no account. Many ſuch examples might be cited to comfort with hope the moſt guilty miniſter, who is wiſe, if not honeſt enough, to ſtop in the career of iniquity, before the meaſure of it be entirely filled, preſſed down, and running over. But if one of thoſe bubbles of fortune, who thinks he always ſhall eſcape, becauſe he always hath eſcaped, not content to wound a free conſtitution of government, ſhould reſolve to make it expire under his adminiſtration; the condition of ſuch an one, however he may flatter himſelf, or be flattered by others, muſt be ten times more wretched and forlorn than the worſt of thoſe to which his cruelty hath reduced multitudes

* NERO infenſius iis, quibus ſuperbia muliebris innitebatur, demovet PALLANTEM curâ rerum, quis à CLAUDIO impoſitus, velut arbitrum regni agebat; ferebaturque, digrediente eo, magnâ proſequentium multitudine, non abſurdè dixiſſe, ire PALLANTEM ut ejuraret. Sanè pepigerat PALLAS, ne cujus facti in præteritum interrogaretur, pareſque rationes cum republicâ haberet. TACIT. An. L. 13.

----For

----For what?----If he ſucceeds in his ſacrilegious deſigns, (they are of as deep a dye, at leaſt.) He may hope for impunity, perhaps, to his grey hairs, and be ſuffered to languiſh thro the infirmities of old age. with an inward remorſe more pungent than any of them; but he is ſure to entail ſervitude on his whole race, and indelible infamy on his memory. If he fails, he miſſes of that impunity, to which he ſacrificed his country; he draws triple vengeance on his own head; and expoſes his innocent family to a thouſand misfortunes, of which it will not be the leaſt, whether he ſucceeds or fails, that they deſcended from him.-----But whatever miniſters may govern, whatever factions may ariſe, let the friends of liberty lay aſide the groundleſs diſtinctions, which are employed to amuſe and betray them; let them continue to coalite; let them hold faſt their integrity, and ſupport with ſpirit and perſeverance the cauſe of their country, and they will confirm the good, reclaim the bad, vanquiſh the incorrigible, and make the Britiſh conſtitution triumph, even over corruption.

I HAVE now gone thro the taſk I impoſed on myſelf, and ſhall only add theſe few words. There was an engagement taken, in the beginning of theſe diſcourſes, not to flatter. I have kept this engagement, and have ſpoken with great freedom; but I hope with the juſtice and moderation, and decency that I intended, of perſons and of things. This freedom intitles me to expect that no parallels, no inuendo's ſhould be ſuppoſed to carry my ſenſe farther than I have expreſſed it. The reaſonable part of mankind will not diſappoint ſo reaſonable an expectation. But there are a ſet of creatures, who have no mercy on paper, to uſe an expreſſion of * JUVENAL, and who are ready to anſwer, even when

* —— ſtulta eſt clementia ——
—— perituraе parcere chartae.

they

they are abſolute ſtrangers to the ſubject. Unable to follow a thread of fact and argument, they play with words, and turn and wreſt particular paſſages. They have done mine that honor, as I am told, and have once or twice ſeen. They may do the ſame again, whenever they pleaſe, ſecure from any reply, unleſs they have ſenſe enough, or their patron for them, to take for a reply the ſtory I am going to tell you, and which you may find related a little differently in one of the Spectators. The ſtory is this.

A CERTAIN pragmatical fellow, in a certain village, took it into his head to write the names of the ſquire, of all his family, of the principal-pariſh officers, and of ſome of the notable members of the veſtry, in the margin of the whole duty of man, over-againſt every ſin, which he found mentioned in that moſt excellent treatiſe. The clamor was great, and all the neighbourhood was in an uproar. At laſt, the miniſter was called in, upon this great emergency; a pious and prudent divine, and the ſame, for ought I know, who was a member of the Spectator's club. He heard them with patience; with ſo much, that he brought them to talk one after the other. When he had heard them, he pronounced that they were all in the wrong; that the book was written againſt ſins of all kinds, whoever ſhould be guilty of them; but that the innocent would give occaſion to unjuſt ſuſpicions by all this clamor, and that the guilty would convict themſelves. They took his advice. The whole duty of man hath been read ever ſince, with much edification, by all the pariſhioners. The innocent hath been moſt certainly confirmed in virtue, and we hope the guilty have been reformed from vice.

I am, SIR, &c.

LETTERS

ON THE

STUDY and USE

OF

HISTORY.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER I.

Chantelou in Touraine, Nov. 6, 1735.

My Lord,

I Have conſidered formerly, with a good deal of attention, the ſubject on which you command me to communicate my thoughts to you: and I practiſed in thoſe days, as much as buſineſs and pleaſure allowed me time to do, the rules that ſeemed to me neceſſary to be obſerved in the ſtudy of hiſtory. They were very different from thoſe which writers on the ſame ſubject have recommended, and which are commonly practiſed. But I confeſs to your lordſhip, that this neither gave me then, nor has given me ſince, any diſtruſt of them. I do not affect ſingularity. On the contrary, I think that a due deference is to be paid to received opinions, and that a due compliance with received cuſtoms is to be held; tho both the one and the other ſhould be, what they often are, abſurd or ridiculous. But this ſervitude is outward only, and abridges in no ſort the liberty of private judgment. The obligations of ſubmitting to it likewiſe, even outwardly, extend no further, than to thoſe opinions and cuſtoms which cannot be oppoſed; or from which we cannot deviate without doing hurt, or giving offence to ſociety. In all theſe caſes, our ſpeculations ought to be free: in all other caſes, our practice

may be ſo. Without any regard therefore to the opinion and practice even of the learned world, I am very willing to tell you mine. But, as it is hard to recover a thread of thought long ago laid aſide, and impoſſible to prove ſome things, and explain others, without the aſſiſtance of many books which I have not here; your lordſhip muſt be content with ſuch an imperfect ſketch, as I am able to ſend you at preſent in this letter.

THE motives that carry men to the ſtudy of hiſtory are different. Some intend, if ſuch as they may be ſaid to ſtudy, nothing more than amuſement, and read the life of ARISTIDES or PHOCION, of EPAMINONDAS or SCIPIO, ALEXANDER or CAESAR, juſt as they play a game at cards, or as they would read the ſtory of the ſeven champions.

OTHERS there are, whoſe motive to this ſtudy is nothing better, and who have the further diſadvantage of becoming a nuſance very often to ſociety, in proportion to the progreſs they make. The former do not improve their reading to any good purpoſe: the latter pervert it to a very bad one, and grow in impertinence as they encreaſe in learning. I think I have known moſt of the firſt kind in England, and moſt of the laſt in France. The perſons I mean are thoſe who read to talk, to ſhine in converſation, and to impoſe in company: who having few ideas to vend of their own growth, ſtore their minds with crude unruminated facts and ſentences; and hope to ſupply, by bare memory, the want of imagination and judgment.

BUT theſe are in the two loweſt forms. The next I ſhall mention are in one a little higher; in the form of thoſe who grow neither wiſer nor better by ſtudy themſelves, but who enable

enable others to ſtudy with greater eaſe, and to purpoſes more uſeful; who make fair copies of foul manuſcripts, give the ſignification of hard words, and take a great deal of other grammatical pains. The obligation to theſe men would be great indeed, if they were in general able to do any thing better, and ſubmitted to this drudgery for the ſake of the public: as ſome of them, it muſt be owned with gratitude, have done, but not later, I think, than about the time of the reſurrection of letters. When works of importance are preſſing, generals themſelves may take up the pick-axe and the ſpade; but in the ordinary courſe of things, when that preſſing neceſſity is over, ſuch tools are left in the hands deſtined to uſe them, the hands of common ſoldiers and peaſants. I approve therefore very much the devotion of a ſtudious man at Chriſt-Church, who was over-heard in his oratory entering into a detail with GOD, as devout perſons are apt to do, and, amongſt other particular thankſgivings, acknowledging the divine goodneſs in furniſhing the world with makers of dictionaries! Theſe men court fame, as well as their betters, by ſuch means as GOD has given them to acquire it: and LITTLETON exerted all the genius he had, when he made a dictionary, tho STEPHENS did not. They deſerve encouragement, however, whilſt they continue to compile, and neither affect wit, nor preſume to reaſon.

THERE is a fourth claſs, of much leſs uſe than theſe, but of much greater name. Men of the firſt rank in learning, and to whom the whole tribe of ſcholars bow with reverence. A man muſt be as indifferent as I am to common cenſure or approbation, to avow a thorough contempt for the whole buſineſs of theſe learned lives; for all the reſearches into antiquity, for all the ſyſtems of chronology and hiſtory, that we owe to the immenſe labors of

of a SCALIGER, a BOCHART, a PETAVIUS, an USHER, and even a MARSHAM. The ſame materials are common to them all; but theſe materials are few, and there is a moral impoſſibility that they ſhould ever have more. They have combined theſe into every form that can be given to them: they have ſuppoſed, they have gueſſed, they have joined diſjointed paſſages of different authors, and broken traditions of uncertain originals, of various people, and of centuries remote from one another as well as from ours. In ſhort, that they might leave no liberty untaken, even a wild fantaſtical ſimilitude of ſounds has ſerved to prop up a ſyſtem. As the materials they have are few, ſo are the very beſt, and ſuch as paſs for authentic, extremely precarious; as ſome of theſe learned perſons themſelves confeſs.

JULIUS AFRICANUS, EUSEBIUS, and GEORGE the monk, opened the principal ſources of all this ſcience; but they corrupted the waters. Their point of view was to make profane hiſtory and chronology agree with ſacred; tho the latter chronology is very far from being eſtabliſhed with the clearneſs and certainty neceſſary to make it a rule. For this purpoſe, the ancient monuments, that theſe writers conveyed to poſterity, were digeſted by them according to the ſyſtem they were to maintain: and none of theſe monuments were delivered down in their original form, and genuine purity. The Dynaſties of MANETHO, for inſtance, are broken to pieces by EUSEBIUS, and ſuch fragments of them as ſuited his deſign, are ſtuck into his work. We have, we know, no more of them. The Codex Alexandrinus we owe to GEORGE the monk. We have no other authority for it; and one cannot ſee without amazement ſuch a man as Sir JOHN MARSHAM undervaluing this authority in one page, and building his ſyſtem upon it in the next. He ſeems even by the lightneſs of his

his expreſſions, if I remember well, for it is long ſince I looked into his canon, not to be much concerned what foundation his ſyſtem had, ſo he ſhewed his ſkill in forming one, and in reducing the immenſe antiquity of the Egyptians within the limits of the Hebraic calculation. In ſhort, my lord, all theſe ſyſtems are ſo many enchanted caſtles; they appear to be ſomething, they are nothing but appearances: like them too, diſſolve the charm, and they vaniſh from the ſight. To diſſolve the charm, we muſt begin at the beginning of them: the expreſſion may be odd, but it is ſignificant. We muſt examine ſcrupulouſly and indifferently the foundations on which they lean: and when we find theſe either faintly probable, or groſly improbable, it would be fooliſh to expect any thing better in the ſuperſtructure. This ſcience is one of thoſe that are "a limine ſalutandae." To do thus much may be neceſſary, that grave authority may not impoſe on our ignorance: to do more, would be to aſſiſt this very authority in impoſing falſe ſcience upon us. I had rather take the DARIUS whom ALEXANDER conquered, for the ſon of HYSTASPES, and make as many anachroniſms as a Jewiſh chronologer, than ſacrifice half my life to collect all the learned lumber that fills the head of an antiquary.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER II.

Concerning the true uſe and advantages of it.

LET me ſay ſomething of hiſtory in general, before I deſcend into the conſideration of particular parts of it, or of the various methods of ſtudy, or of the different views of thoſe that apply themſelves to it, as I had begun to do in my former letter.

THE love of hiſtory ſeems inſeparable from human nature, becauſe it ſeems inſeparable from ſelf-love. The ſame principle in this inſtance carries us forward and backward, to future and to paſt ages. We imagine that the things, which affect us, muſt affect poſterity: this ſentiment runs thro mankind, from CAESAR down to the pariſh clerk in POPE's miſcellany. We are fond of preſerving, as far as it is in our frail power, the memory of our own adventures, of thoſe of our own time, and of thoſe that preceded it. Rude heaps of ſtones have been raiſed, and ruder hymns have been compoſed, for this purpoſe, by nations who had not yet the uſe of arts and letters. To go no farther back, the triumphs of ODIN were celebrated in runic ſongs, and the feats of our Britiſh anceſtors were recorded in thoſe of their bards. The ſavages

of

of America have the ſame cuſtom at this day: and long hiſtorical ballads of their huntings and their wars are ſung at all their feſtivals. There is no need of ſaying how this paſſion grows, among civilized nations, in proportion to the means of gratifying it: but let us obſerve that the ſame principle of nature directs us as ſtrongly, and more generally as well as more early, to indulge our own curioſity, inſtead of preparing to gratify that of others. The child harkens with delight to the tales of his nurſe: he learns to read, and he devours with eagerneſs fabulous legends and novels: in riper years he applies himſelf to hiſtory, or to that which he takes for hiſtory, to authorized romance: and, even in age, the deſire of knowing what has happened to other men, yields to the deſire alone of relating what has happened to ourſelves. Thus hiſtory, true or falſe, ſpeaks to our paſſions always. What pity is it, my lord, that even the beſt ſhould ſpeak to our underſtandings ſo ſeldom? That it does ſo, we have none to blame but ourſelves. Nature has done her part She has opened this ſtudy to every man who can read and think: and what ſhe has made the moſt agreeable, reaſon can make the moſt uſeful, application of our minds. But if we conſult our reaſon, we ſhall be far from following the examples of our fellow-creatures, in this as in moſt other caſes, who are ſo proud of being rational. We ſhall neither read to ſoothe our indolence, nor to gratify our vanity: as little ſhall we content ourſelves to drudge like grammarians and critics, that others may be able to ſtudy with greater eaſe and profit, like philoſophers and ſtateſmen; as little ſhall we affect the ſlender merit of becoming great ſcholars at the expence of groping all our lives in the dark mazes of antiquity. All theſe miſtake the true drift of ſtudy, and the true uſe of hiſtory. Nature gave us curioſity to excite the induſtry of our minds; but ſhe never intended it ſhould be made the princi-

pal, much leſs the ſole object of their application. The true and proper object of this application is a conſtant improvement in private and in public virtue. An application to any ſtudy that tends neither directly nor indirectly to make us better men and better citizens, is at beſt but a ſpecious and ingenious ſort of idleneſs, to uſe an expreſſion of TILLOTSON: and the knowledge we acquire by it is a creditable kind of ignorance, nothing more. This creditable kind of ignorance is, in my opinion, the whole benefit which the generality of men, even of the moſt learned, reap from the ſtudy of hiſtory: and yet the ſtudy of hiſtory ſeems to me, of all other, the moſt proper to train us up to private and public virtue.

YOUR lordſhip may very well be ready by this time, and after ſo much bold cenſure on my part, to aſk me, what then is the true uſe of hiſtory? in what reſpects it may ſerve to make us better and wiſer? and what method is to be purſued in the ſtudy of it, for attaining theſe great ends? I will anſwer you by quoting what I have read ſome where or other, in DIONYSIUS HALICARN. I think, that hiſtory is philoſophy teaching by examples. We need but to caſt our eyes on the world, and we ſhall ſee the daily force of example: we need but to turn them inward, and we ſhall ſoon diſcover why example has this force. "Pauci prudentia," ſays TACITUS, "honeſta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis diſcernunt: plures "aliorum eventis docentur." Such is the imperfection of human underſtanding, ſuch the frail temper of our minds, that abſtract or general propoſitions, tho ever ſo true, appear obſcure or doubtful to us very often, till they are explained by examples; and that the wiſeſt leſſons in favor of virtue go but a little way to convince the judgment, and determine the will, unleſs they are enforced by the ſame means; and we are

are obliged to apply to ourſelves what we ſee happen to other men. Inſtructions by precept have the further diſadvantage of coming on the authority of others, and frequently require a long deduction of reaſoning. "Homines amplius oculis, "quam auribus, credunt: longum iter eſt per praecepta, "breve et efficax per exempla." The reaſon of this judgment, which I quote from one of SENECA's epiſtles in confirmation of my own opinion, reſts, I think, on this; that when examples are pointed out to us, there is a kind of appeal, with which we are flattered, made to our ſenſes, as well as our underſtandings. The inſtruction comes then upon our own authority: we frame the precept after our own experience, and yield to fact when we reſiſt ſpeculation. But this is not the only advantage of inſtruction by example; for example appeals not to our underſtanding alone, but to our paſſions likewiſe. Example aſſuages theſe, or animates them; ſets paſſion on the ſide of judgment, and makes the whole man of a piece; which is more than the ſtrongeſt reaſoning and the cleareſt demonſtration can do: and thus forming habits by repetition, example ſecures the obſervance of thoſe precepts which example inſinuated. Is it not PLINY, my lord, who ſays, that the gentleſt, he ſhould have added the moſt effectual way of commanding, is by example? "Mitius jubetur exemplo." The harſheſt orders are ſoftened by example, and tyranny itſelf becomes perſuaſive. What pity it is that ſo few princes have learned this way of commanding? But again: the force of examples is not confined to thoſe alone, that paſs immediately under our ſight: the examples, that memory ſuggeſts, have the ſame effect in their degree, and an habit of recalling them will ſoon produce the habit of imitating them. In the ſame epiſtle, from whence I cited a paſſage juſt now, SENECA ſays that CLEANTHES had

never become ſo perfect a copy of ZENO, if he had not paſſed his life with him; that PLATO, ARISTOTLE, and the other philoſophers of that ſchool, profited more by the example, than by the diſcourſe of SOCRATES. [But here, by the way, SENECA miſtook; for SOCRATES died two years according to ſome, and four years according to others, before the birth of ARISTOTLE: and his miſtake might come from the inaccuracy of thoſe who collected for him; as ERASMUS obſerves, after QUINTILIAN, in his judgment on SENECA.] But be this, which was ſcarce worth a parentheſis, as it will; he adds that METRODORUS, HERMACHUS, and POLYAENUS, men of great note, were formed by living under the ſame roof with EPICURUS, not by frequenting his ſchool. Theſe are inſtances of the force of immediate example. But your lordſhip knows that the citizens of Rome placed the images of their anceſtors in the veſtibules of their houſes; ſo that, whenever they went in or out, theſe venerable buſtoes met their eyes, and recalled the glorious actions of the dead, to fire the living, to excite them to imitate and even to emulate their great forefathers. The ſucceſs anſwered the deſign. The virtue of one generation was transfuſed, by the magic of example, into ſeveral: and a ſpirit of heroiſm was maintained through many ages of that commonwealth. Now theſe are ſo many inſtances of the force of remote example; and from all theſe inſtances we may conclude, that examples of both kinds are neceſſary.

THE ſchool of example, my lord, is the world: and the maſters of this ſchool are hiſtory and experience. I am far from contending that the former is preferable to the latter. I think upon the whole otherwiſe: but this I ſay, that the former is abſolutely neceſſary to prepare us for the latter, and to accompany us whilſt we are under the diſcipline of the

the latter, that is, through the whole courſe of our lives. No doubt ſome few men may be quoted, to whom nature gave what art and induſtry can give to no man. But ſuch examples will prove nothing againſt me, becauſe I admit that the ſtudy of hiſtory, without experience, is inſufficient; but aſſert, that experience itſelf is ſo without genius. Genius is preferable to the other two; but I would wiſh to find the three together: for how great ſoever a genius may be, and how much ſoever he may acquire new light and heat, as he proceeds in his rapid courſe, certain it is that he will never ſhine with the full luſtre, nor ſhed the full influence he is capable of, unleſs to his own experience he adds the experience of other men and other ages. Genius, without the improvement, at leaſt of experience, is what comets once were thought to be, a blazing meteor, irregular in his courſe, and dangerous in his approach; of no uſe to any ſyſtem, and able to deſtroy any. Mere ſons of earth, if they have experience without any knowledge of the hiſtory of the world, are but half ſcholars in the ſcience of mankind. And if they are converſant in hiſtory without experience, they are worſe than ignorant; they are pedants, always incapable, ſometimes meddling and preſuming. The man, who has all three, is an honor to his country, and a public bleſſing: and ſuch, I truſt, your lordſhip will be in this century, as your great-grandfather * was in the laſt.

I have inſiſted a little the longer on this head, and have made theſe diſtinctions the rather, becauſe tho I attribute a great deal more, than many will be ready to allow, to the ſtudy of hiſtory; yet I would not willingly even ſeem to fall into the ridicule of aſcribing to it ſuch extravagant effects, as

* Earl of CLARENDON.

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ſeveral have done from TULLY down to CASAUBON, LA MOTHE LE VAYER, and other modern pedants. When TULLY informs us, in the ſecond book of his Tuſculan diſputations, that the firſt SCIPIO AFRICANUS had always in his hands the works of XENOPHON, he advances nothing but what is probable and reaſonable. To ſay nothing of the retreat of the ten thouſand, nor of other parts of XENOPHON's writings; the images of virtue, repreſented in that admirable picture the Cyropaedia, were proper to entertain a ſoul that was fraught with virtue, and CYRUS was worthy to be imitated by SCIPIO. So SELIM emulated CAESAR, whoſe commentaries were tranſlated for his uſe againſt the cuſtoms of the Turks: ſo CAESAR emulated ALEXANDER; and ALEXANDER, ACHILLES. There is nothing ridiculous here, except the uſe that is made of this paſſage by thoſe who quote it. But what the ſame TULLY ſays, in the fourth book of his academical diſputations, concerning LUCULLUS, ſeems to me very extraordinary. "In "Aſiam factus imperator venit; cum eſſet Roma profectus "rei militaris rudis;" [one would be ready to aſcribe ſo ſudden a change, and ſo vaſt an improvement, to nothing leſs than knowledge infuſed by inſpiration, if we were not aſſured in the ſame place that they were effected by very natural means, by ſuch as it is in every man's power to employ] "partim "percontando a peritis, partim in rebus geſtis legendis." LUCULLUS, according to this account, verified the reproach on the Roman nobility, which SALLUST puts into the mouth of MARIUS. But as I diſcover the paſſion of MARIUS, and his prejudices to the patricians, in one caſe; ſo I diſcover, methinks, the cunning of TULLY, and his partiality to himſelf, in the other. LUCULLUS, after he had been choſen conſul, obtained by intrigue the government of Cilicia, and ſo put himſelf into a ſituation of commanding the Roman army againſt MITHRIDATES: TULLY had the ſame government afterwards,

wards, and tho he had no MITHRIDATES, nor any other enemy of conſequence, oppoſed to him; tho all his military feats conſiſted in ſurpriſing and pillaging a parcel of highlanders and wild Cilicians; yet he aſſumed the airs of a conqueror, and deſcribed his actions in ſo pompous a ſtyle, that the account becomes burleſque. He laughs, indeed, in one of his letters to ATTICUS, at his generalſhip: but if we turn to thoſe he writ to COELIUS RUFUS, and to CATO, upon this occaſion, or to thoſe wherein he expreſſes to ATTICUS his reſentment againſt CATO, for not propoſing in his favor the honors uſually decreed to conquerors, we may ſee how vanity turned his head, and how impudently he inſiſted on obtaining a triumph. Is it any ſtrain now to ſuppoſe, that he meant to inſinuate, in the paſſage I have quoted about LUCULLUS, that the difference between him and the former governor of Cilicia, even in military merit, aroſe from the different conjuncture alone; and that LUCULLUS could not have done in Cilicia, at that time, more than he himſelf did? CICERO had red and queſtioned at leaſt as much as LUCULLUS, and would therefore have appeared as great a captain, if he had had as great a prince as MITHRIDATES to encounter. But the truth is that LUCULLUS was made a great captain by theory, or the ſtudy of hiſtory, alone, no more than FERDINAND of Spain and ALPHONSUS of Naples were cured of deſperate diſtempers by reading LIVY and QUINTUS CURTIUS: a ſilly tale, which BODIN, AMYOT, and others have picked up and propagated. LUCULLUS had ſerved in his youth againſt the Marſi, probably in other wars, and SYLLA took early notice of him: he went into the eaſt with this general, and had a great ſhare in his confidence. He commanded in ſeveral expeditions. It was he who reſtored the Colophonians to their liberty, and who puniſhed the revolt of the people of Mytelene. Thus we ſee that LUCULLUS was formed by experience, as well as

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ſtudy, and by an experience gained in thoſe very countries, where he gathered ſo many laurels afterwards in fighting againſt the ſame enemy. The late duke of MARLBOROUGH never red XENOPHON, moſt certainly, nor the relation perhaps of any modern wars; but he ſerved in his youth under monſieur de TURENNE, and I have heard that he was taken notice of, in thoſe early days, by that great man. He afterwards commanded in an expedition to Ireland, ſerved a campaign or two, if I miſtake not, under king WILLIAM in Flanders: and, beſides theſe occaſions, had none of gaining experience in war, till he came to the head of our armies in one thouſand ſeven hundred and two, and triumphed, not over Aſiatic troops, but over the veteran armies of France. The Roman had on his ſide genius and experience cultivated by ſtudy: the Briton had genius improved by experience, and no more. The firſt therefore is not an example of what ſtudy can do alone; but the latter is an example of what genius and experience can do without ſtudy. They can do much, to be ſure, when the firſt is given in a ſuperior degree. But ſuch examples are very rare: and when they happen it will be ſtill true, that they would have had fewer blemiſhes, and would have come nearer to the perfection of private and public virtue, in all the arts of peace and atchievements of war, if the views of ſuch men had been enlarged, and their ſentiments ennobled, by acquiring that caſt of thought, and that temper of mind, which will grow up and become habitual in every man who applies himſelf early to the ſtudy of hiſtory, as to the ſtudy of philoſophy, with the intention of being wiſer and better, without the affectation of being more learned.

THE temper of the mind is formed, and a certain turn given to our ways of thinking; in a word, the ſeeds of that moral character which cannot wholly alter the natural charac-

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ter, but may correct the evil and improve the good that is in it, or do the very contrary, are ſown betimes, and much ſooner than is commonly ſuppoſed. It is equally certain, that we ſhall gather or not gather experience, be the better or the worſe for this experience, when we come into the world and mingle amongſt mankind, according to the temper of mind, and the turn of thought, that we have acquired beforehand, and bring along with us. They will tincture all our future acquiſitions; ſo that the very ſame experience, which ſecures the judgment of one man, or excites him to virtue, ſhall lead another into error, or plunge him into vice. From hence it follows, that the ſtudy of hiſtory has in this reſpect a double advantage. If experience alone can make us perfect in our parts, experience cannot begin to teach them till we are actually on the ſtage: whereas, by a previous application to this ſtudy, we conn them over at leaſt, before we appear there: we are not quite unprepared, we learn our parts ſooner, and we learn them better.

Let me explain what I mean by an example. There is ſcarce any folly or vice more epidemical among the ſons of men, than that ridiculous and hurtful vanity, by which the people of each country are apt to prefer themſelves to thoſe of every other; and to make their own cuſtoms, and manners, and opinions, the ſtandards of right and wrong, of true and falſe. The Chineſe mandarins were ſtrangely ſurpriſed, and almoſt incredulous, when the Jeſuits ſhewed them how ſmall a figure their empire made in the general map of the world. The Samojedes wondered much at the Czar of Muſcovy for not living among them: and the Hottentot, who returned from Europe, ſtripped himſelf naked as ſoon as he came home, put on his bracelets of guts and garbage, and grew ſtinking and louſy as faſt as he could. Now nothing can con-

tribute more to prevent us from being tainted with this vanity, than to accuſtom ourſelves early to contemplate the different nations of the earth, in that vaſt map which hiſtory ſpreads before us, in their riſe and their fall, in their barbarous and civilized ſtates, in the likeneſs and unlikeneſs of them all to one another, and of each to itſelf. By frequently renewing this proſpect to the mind, the Mexican with his cap and coat of feathers, ſacrificing a human victim to his god, will not appear more ſavage to our eyes, than the Spaniard with an hat on his head, and a gonilla round his neck, ſacrificing whole nations to his ambition, his avarice, and even the wantonneſs of his cruelty. I might ſhew, by a multitude of other examples, how hiſtory prepares us for experience, and guides us in it: and many of theſe would be both curious and important. I might likewiſe bring ſeveral other inſtances, wherein hiſtory ſerves to purge the mind of thoſe national partialities and prejudices that we are apt to contract in our education, and that experience for the moſt part rather confirms than removes: becauſe it is for the moſt part confined, like our education. But I apprehend growing too prolix, and ſhall therefore conclude this head by obſerving, that tho an early and proper application to the ſtudy of hiſtory will contribute extremely to keep our minds free from a ridiculous partiality in favor of our own country, and a vicious prejudice againſt others; yet the ſame ſtudy will create in us a preference of affection to our own country. There is a ſtory told of ABGARUS. He brought ſeveral beaſts taken in different places to Rome, they ſay, and let them looſe before AUGUSTUS: every beaſt ran immediately to that part of the Circus, where a parcel of earth taken from his native ſoil had been laid. "Credat Judaeus Apella." This tale might paſs on JOSEPHUS; for in him, I believe, I red it: but ſurely the love of our country is a leſſon of reaſon, not an inſtitution of nature.

Education and habit, obligation and intereſt, attach us to it, not inſtinct. It is however ſo neceſſary to be cultivated, and the proſperity of all ſocieties, as well as the grandeur of ſome, depends upon it ſo much, that orators by their eloquence, and poets by their enthuſiaſm, have endeavored to work up this precept of morality into a principle of paſſion. But the examples which we find in hiſtory, improved by the lively deſcriptions, and the juſt applauſes or cenſures of hiſtorians, will have a much better and more permanent effect, than declamation or ſong, or the dry ethics of mere philoſophy. In fine, to converſe with hiſtorians is to keep good company: many of them were excellent men, and thoſe who were not ſuch, have taken care however to appear ſuch in their writings. It muſt be therefore of great uſe to prepare ourſelves by this converſation for that of the world; and to receive our firſt impreſſions, and to acquire our firſt habits, in a ſcene where images of virtue and vice are continually repreſented to us in the colors that belong properly to them, before we enter on another ſcene, where virtue and vice are too often confounded, and what belongs to one is aſcribed to the other.

Besides the advantage of beginning our acquaintance with mankind ſooner, and of bringing with us into the world, and the buſineſs of it, ſuch a caſt of thought and ſuch a temper of mind, as will enable us to make a better uſe of our experience; there is this further advantage in the ſtudy of hiſtory, that the improvement we make by it extends to more objects, and is made at the expence of other men: whereas that improvement, which is the effect of our own experience, is confined to fewer objects, and is made at our own expence. To ſtate the account fairly therefore between theſe two improvements; tho the latter be the more valuable, yet allowance being made on one ſide for the much greater number of ex-

amples that hiſtory preſents to us, and deduction being made on the other of the price we often pay for our experience, the value of the former will riſe in proportion. "I have recorded theſe things," ſays POLYBIUS, after giving an account of the defeat of REGULUS, "that they who read theſe commenta-"ries may be rendered better by them; for all men have two "ways of improvement, one ariſing from their own experi-"ence, and one from the experience of others. Evidentior "quidem illa eſt, quae per propria ducit infortunia; at tutior "illa, quae per aliena." I uſe CASAUBON's tranſlation. POLYBIUS goes on, and concludes, "that ſince the firſt of theſe "ways expoſes us to great labour and peril, whilſt the ſe-"cond works the ſame good effect, and is attended by no "evil circumſtance, every one ought to take for granted, that "the ſtudy of hiſtory is the beſt ſchool where he can learn how "to conduct himſelf in all the ſituations of life." REGULUS had ſeen at Rome many examples of magnanimity, of frugality, of the contempt of riches, and of other virtues; and theſe virtues he practiſed. But he had not learned, nor had opportunity of learning another leſſon, which the examples recorded in hiſtory inculcate frequently, the leſſon of moderation. An inſatiable thirſt of military fame, an unconfined ambition of extending their empire, an extravagant confidence in their own courage and force, an inſolent contempt of their enemies, and an impetuous over-bearing ſpirit with which they purſued all their enterprizes, compoſed in his days the diſtinguiſhing character of a Roman. Whatever the ſenate and people reſolved to the members of that commonwealth, appeared both practicable and juſt. Neither difficulties nor dangers could check them; and their ſages had not yet diſcovered, that virtues in exceſs degenerate into vices. Notwithſtanding the beautiful rant which HORACE puts into his mouth, I make no doubt that REGULUS learned at Carthage thoſe leſſons of moderation

moderation which he had not learned at Rome: but he learned them by experience, and the fruits of this experience came too late, and coſt too dear; for they coſt the total defeat of the Roman army, the prolongation of a calamitous war which might have been finiſhed by a glorious peace, the loſs of liberty to thouſands of Roman citizens, and to REGULUS himſelf the loſs of life in the midſt of torments, if we are entirely to credit what is perhaps exaggeration in the Roman authors.

THERE is another advantage, worthy our obſervation, that belongs to the ſtudy of hiſtory; and that I ſhall mention here, not only becauſe of the importance of it, but becauſe it leads me immediately to ſpeak of the nature of the improvement we ought to have in our view, and of the method in which it ſeems to me that this improvement ought to be purſued: two particulars from which your lordſhip may think perhaps that I digreſs too long. The advantage I mean conſiſts in this, that the examples which hiſtory preſents to us, both of men and of events, are generally complete: the whole example is before us, and conſequently the whole leſſon, or ſometimes the various leſſons, which philoſophy propoſes to teach us by this example. For firſt, as to men; we ſee them at their whole length in hiſtory, and we ſee them generally there through a medium leſs partial at leaſt than that of experience: for I imagine that a whig or a tory, whilſt thoſe parties ſubſiſted, would have condemned in SATURNINUS the ſpirit of faction which he applauded in his own tribunes, and would have applauded in DRUSUS the ſpirit of moderation which he deſpiſed in thoſe of the contrary party, and which he ſuſpected and hated in thoſe of his own party. The villain who has impoſed on mankind by his power or cunning, and whom experience could not unmaſk for a time, is unmaſked at length: and

and the honeſt man, who has been miſunderſtood or defamed, is juſtified before his ſtory ends. Or if this does not happen, if the villain dies with his maſk on, in the midſt of applauſe, and honor, and wealth, and power, and if the honeſt man dies under the ſame load of calumny and diſgrace under which he lived, driven perhaps into exile, and expoſed to want; yet we ſee hiſtorical juſtice executed, the name of one branded with infamy, and that of the other celebrated with panegyric to ſucceeding ages. "Praecipuum munus annalium reor, ne "virtutes ſileantur; utque pravis dictis factiſque ex poſteritate "et infamia metus ſit." Thus, according to TACITUS, and according to truth, from which his judgments ſeldom deviate, the principal duty of hiſtory is to erect a tribunal, like that among the Egyptians, mentioned by DIODORUS SICULUS, where men and princes themſelves were tried, and condemned or acquitted, after their deaths; where thoſe who had not been puniſhed for their crimes, and thoſe who had not been honored for their virtues, received a juſt retribution. The ſentence is pronounced in one caſe, as it was in the other, too late to correct or recompenſe; but it is pronounced in time to render theſe examples of general inſtruction to mankind. Thus CICERO, that I may quote one inſtance out of thouſands, and that I may do juſtice to the general character of that great man, whoſe particular failing I have cenſured ſo freely; CICERO, I ſay was abandoned by OCTAVIUS, and maſſacred by ANTONY. But let any man read this fragment of AURELIUS FUSCUS, and chuſe which he would wiſh to have been, the orator, or the triumvir? "Quoad humanum genus incolume manſerit, "quamdiu uſus literis, honor ſummae eloquentiae pretium erit, "quamdiu rerum natura aut fortuna ſteterit, aut memoria du-"raverit, admirabile poſteris vigebis ingenium, et uno pro-"ſcriptus ſeculo, proſcribes ANTONIUM omnibus."

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THUS again, as to events that ſtand recorded in hiſtory; we ſee them all, we ſee them as they followed one another, or as they produced one another, cauſes or effects, immediate or remote. We are caſt back, as it were, into former ages: we live with the men who lived before us, and we inhabit countries that we never ſaw. Place is enlarged, and time prolonged, in this manner; ſo that the man who applies himſelf early to the ſtudy of hiſtory, may acquire in a few years, and before he ſets his foot abroad in the world, not only a more extended knowledge of mankind, but the experience of more centuries than any of the patriarchs ſaw. The events we are witneſſes of, in the courſe of the longeſt life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, ſingle, and un-relative, if I may uſe ſuch an expreſſion for want of a better in Engliſh; in French I would ſay iſolés: they appear ſuch very often, are called accidents, and looked on as the effects of chance; a word, by the way, which is in conſtant uſe, and has frequently no determinate meaning. We get over the preſent difficulty, we improve the momentary advantage, as well as we can, and we look no farther. Experience can carry us no farther; for experience can go a very little way back in diſcovering cauſes: and effects are not the objects of experience till they happen. From hence many errors in judgment, and by conſequence in conduct, neceſſarily ariſe. And here too lies the difference we are ſpeaking of between hiſtory and experience. The advantage on the ſide of the former is double. In ancient hiſtory, as we have ſaid already, the examples are complete, which are incomplete in the courſe of experience. The beginning, the progreſſion, and the end appear, not of particular reigns, much leſs of particular enterprizes, or ſyſtems of policy alone, but of governments, of nations, of empires, and of all the various ſyſtems that have ſucceeded one another in the courſe of their duration. In modern hiſtory, the examples may be, and ſometimes

times are, incomplete; but they have this advantage when they are ſo, that they ſerve to render complete the examples of our own time. Experience is doubly defective; we are born too late to ſee the beginning, and we die too ſoon to ſee the end of many things. Hiſtory ſupplies both theſe defects. Modern hiſtory ſhews the cauſes, when experience preſents the effects alone: and ancient hiſtory enables us to gueſs at the effects, when experience preſents the cauſes alone. Let me explain my meaning by two examples of theſe kinds; one paſt, the other actually preſent.

When the revolution of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight happened, few men then alive, I ſuppoſe, went farther in their ſearch after the cauſes of it, than the extravagant attempt of king James againſt the religion and liberty of his people. His former conduct, and the paſſages of king Charles the ſecond's reign might rankle ſtill at the hearts of ſome men, but could not be ſet to account among the cauſes of his depoſition; ſince he had ſucceeded, notwithſtanding them, peaceably to the throne: and the nation in general, even many of thoſe who would have excluded him from it, were deſirous, or at leaſt willing, that he ſhould continue in it. Now this example, thus ſtated, affords, no doubt, much good inſtruction to the kings, and people of Britain. But this inſtruction is not entire, becauſe the example thus ſtated, and confined to the experience of that age, is imperfect. King James's mal-adminiſtration rendered a revolution neceſſary and practicable; but his mal-adminiſtration, as well as all his preceding conduct, was cauſed by his bigot-attachment to popery, and to the principles of arbitrary government, from which no warning could divert him. His bigot-attachment to theſe was cauſed by the exile of the royal family; this exile was cauſed by the uſurpation of Cromwell: and Cromwell's uſurpation was

was the effect of a former rebellion, begun not without reaſon on account of liberty, but without any valid pretence on account of religion. During this exile, our princes caught the taint of popery and foreign politics. We made them unfit to govern us, and after that were forced to recal them that they might reſcue us out of anarchy. It was neceſſary therefore, your lordſhip ſees, at the revolution, and it is more ſo now, to go back in hiſtory, at leaſt as far as I have mentioned, and perhaps farther, even to the beginning of king JAMES the firſt's reign, to render this event a complete example, and to develope all the wiſe, honeſt, and ſalutary precepts, with which it is pregnant, both to king and ſubject.

THE other example ſhall be taken from what has ſucceeded the revolution. Few men at that time looked forward enough, to foreſee the neceſſary conſequences of the new conſtitution of the revenue, that was ſoon afterwards formed; nor of the method of funding that immediately took place; which, abſurd as they are, have continued ever ſince, till it is become ſcarce poſſible to alter them. Few people, I ſay, foreſaw how the creation of funds, and the multiplication of taxes, would encreaſe yearly the power of the crown, and bring our liberties, by a natural and neceſſary progreſſion, into more real, tho leſs apparent danger, than they were in before the revolution. The exceſſive ill huſbandry practiſed from the very beginning of king WILLIAM's reign, and which laid the foundations of all we feel and all we fear, was not the effect of ignorance, miſtake, or what we call chance, but of deſign and ſcheme in thoſe who had the ſway at that time. I am not ſo uncharitable, however, as to believe that they intended to bring upon their country all the miſchiefs that we, who came after them, experience and apprehend. No, they ſaw the meaſures,

they took ſingly, and unrelatively, or relatively alone to ſome immediate object. The notion of attaching men to the new government, by tempting them to embark their fortunes on the ſame bottom, was a reaſon of ſtate to ſome: the notion of creating a new, that is, a moneyed intereſt, in oppoſition to the landed intereſt or as a balance to it, and of acquiring a ſuperior influence in the city of London at leaſt by the eſtabliſhment of great corporations, was a reaſon of party to others: and I make no doubt that the opportunity of amaſſing immenſe eſtates by the management of funds, by trafficking in paper, and by all the arts of jobbing, was a reaſon of private intereſt to thoſe who ſupported and improved this ſcheme of iniquity, if not to thoſe who deviſed it. They looked no farther. Nay, we who came after them, and have long taſted the bitter fruits of the corruption they planted, were far from taking ſuch an alarm at our diſtreſs, and our danger, as they deſerved; till the moſt remote and fatal effect of cauſes, laid by the laſt generation, was very near becoming an object of experience in this. Your lordſhip, I am ſure, ſees at once how much a due reflection on the paſſages of former times, as they ſtand recorded in the hiſtory of our own, and of other countries, would have deterred a free people from truſting the ſole management of ſo great a revenue, and the ſole nomination of thoſe legions of officers employed in it, to their chief magiſtrate. There remained indeed no pretence for doing ſo, when once a ſalary was ſettled on the prince, and the public revenue was no longer in any ſenſe his revenue, nor the public expence his expence. Give me me leave to add, that it would have been, and would be ſtill, more decent with regard to the prince, and leſs repugnant if not more conformable to the principles and practice too of our government, to take this power and influence from the prince, or to ſhare it with him; than

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to exclude men from the privilege of repreſenting their fellow-ſubjects who would chuſe them in parliament, purely becauſe they are employed and truſted by the prince.

YOUR lordſhip ſees not only, how much a due reflection upon the experience of other ages and countries would have pointed out national corruption, as the natural and neceſſary conſequence of inveſting the crown with the management of ſo great a revenue; but alſo the loſs of liberty, as the natural and neceſſary conſequence of national corruption.

THESE two examples explain ſufficiently what they are intended to explain. It only remains therefore upon this head, to obſerve the difference between the two manners in which hiſtory ſupplies the defects of our own experience. It ſhews us cauſes as in fact they were laid, with their immediate effects: and it enables us to gueſs at future events. It can do no more, in the nature of things. My lord BACON, in his ſecond book of the Advancement of learning, having in his mind, I ſuppoſe, what PHILO and JOSEPHUS aſſerted of MOSES, affirms divine hiſtory to have this prerogative, that the narration may be before the fact as well as after. But ſince the ages of prophecy, as well as miracles, are paſt, we muſt content ourſelves to gueſs at what will be, by what has been: we have no other means in our power, and hiſtory furniſhes us with theſe. How we are to improve, and apply theſe means, as well as how we are to acquire them, ſhall be deduced more particularly in another letter.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER III.

1. An objection againſt the utility of hiſtory removed. 2. The falſe and true aims of thoſe who ſtudy it. 3. Of the hiſtory of the firſt ages, with reflections on the ſtate of ancient hiſtory prophane and ſacred.

WERE theſe letters to fall into the hands of ſome ingenious perſons who adorn the age we live in, your lordſhip's correſpondent would be joked upon for his project of improving men in virtue and wiſdom by the ſtudy of hiſtory. The general characters of men, it would be ſaid, are determined by their natural conſtitutions, as their particular actions are by immediate objects. Many very converſant in hiſtory would be cited, who have proved ill men, or bad politicians; and a long roll would be produced of others, who have arrived at a great pitch of private, and public virtue, without any aſſiſtance of this kind. Something has been ſaid already to anticipate this objection; but, ſince I have heard ſeveral perſons affirm ſuch propoſitions with great confidence, a loud laugh, or a ſilent ſneer at the pedants who preſumed to think otherwiſe; I will ſpend a few paragraphs, with your lordſhip's leave, to ſhew that ſuch affirmations, for to affirm amongſt theſe

theſe fine men is to reaſon, either prove too much, or prove nothing.

If our general characters were determined abſolutely, as they are certainly influenced, by our conſtitutions, and if our particular actions were ſo by immediate objects; all inſtruction by precept, as well as example, and all endeavors to form the moral character by education, would be unneceſſary. Even the little care that is taken, and ſurely it is impoſſible to take leſs, in the training up our youth, would be too much. But the truth is widely different from this repreſentation of it; for, what is vice, and what is virtue? I ſpeak of them in a large and philoſophical ſenſe. The former is, I think, no more than the exceſs, abuſe, and miſapplication of appetites, deſires, and paſſions, natural and innocent, nay uſeful and neceſſary. The latter conſiſts in the moderation and government, in the uſe and application of theſe appetites, deſires, and paſſions, according to the rules of reaſon, and therefore often in oppoſition to their own blind impulſe.

What now is education? that part, that principal and moſt neglected part of it, I mean, which tends to form the moral character? It is, I think, an inſtitution deſigned to lead men from their tender years, by precept and example, by argument and authority, to the practice, and to the habit of practiſing theſe rules. The ſtronger our appetites, deſires, and paſſions are, the harder indeed is the taſk of education: but when the efforts of education are proportioned to this ſtrength, altho our keeneſt appetites and deſires, and our ruling paſſions cannot be reduced to a quiet and uniform ſubmiſſion, yet, are not their exceſſes aſſwaged? are not their abuſes and miſapplications, in ſome degree, diverted or checked? Tho the pilot cannot lay the ſtorm, cannot he carry the

ſhip,

ſhip, by his art, better through it, and often prevent the wreck that would always happen, without him? If ALEXANDER who loved wine, and was naturally choleric, had been bred under the ſeverity of Roman diſcipline, it is probable he would neither have made a bonfire of Perſepolis for his whore, nor have killed his friend. If SCIPIO, who was naturally given to women, for which anecdote we have, if I miſtake not, the authority of POLYBIUS, as well as ſome verſes of NAEVIUS preſerved by A. GELLIUS, had been educated by OLYMPIAS at the court of PHILIP, it is improbable that he would have reſtored the beautiful Spaniard. In ſhort, if the renowned SOCRATES had not corrected nature by art, this firſt apoſtle of the gentiles had been a very profligate fellow, by his own confeſſion; for he was inclined to all the vices ZOPYRUS imputed to him, as they ſay, on the obſervation of his phyſiognomy.

WITH him therefore, who denies the effects of education, it would be in vain to diſpute; and with him who admits them, there can be diſpute, concerning that ſhare which I aſcribe to the ſtudy of hiſtory, in forming our moral characters, and making us better men. The very perſons who pretend that inclinations cannot be reſtrained, nor habits corrected, againſt our natural bent, would be the firſt perhaps to prove, in certain caſes, the contrary. A fortune at court, or the favors of a lady, have prevailed on many to conceal, and they could not conceal without reſtraining, which is one ſtep towards correcting, the vices they were by nature addicted to the moſt. Shall we imagine now, that the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice, the charms of a bright and laſting reputation, the terror of being delivered over as criminals to all poſterity, the real benefit ariſing from a conſcientious diſcharge of the duty we owe to others, which benefit fortune can neither

ther hinder nor take away, and the reaſonableneſs of conforming ourſelves to the deſigns of God manifeſted in the conſtitution of the human nature; ſhall we imagine, I ſay, that all theſe are not able to acquire the ſame power over thoſe who are continually called upon to a contemplation of them, and they who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of hiſtory are ſo called upon, as other motives, mean and ſordid in compariſon of theſe, can uſurp on other men?

2. That the ſtudy of hiſtory, far from making us wiſer, and more uſeful citizens, as well as better men, may be of no advantage whatſoever; that it may ſerve to render us mere antiquaries and ſcholars; or that it may help to make us forward coxcombs, and prating pedants, I have already allowed. But this is not the fault of hiſtory: and to convince us that it is not, we need only contraſt the true uſe of hiſtory with the uſe that is made of it by ſuch men as theſe. We ought always to keep in mind, that hiſtory is philoſophy teaching by examples how to conduct ourſelves in all the ſituations of private and public life; that therefore we muſt apply ourſelves to it in a philoſophical ſpirit and manner; that we muſt riſe from particular to general knowledge, and that we muſt fit ourſelves for the ſociety and buſineſs of mankind by accuſtoming our minds to reflect and meditate on the characters we find deſcribed, and the courſe of events we find related there. Particular examples may be of uſe ſometimes in particular caſes; but the application of them is dangerous. It muſt be done with the utmoſt circumſpection, or it will be ſeldom done with ſucceſs. And yet one would think that this was the principal uſe of the ſtudy of hiſtory, by what has been written on the ſubject. I know not whether Machiavel himſelf is quite free from defect on this account: he ſeems to carry the uſe and application of particular examples ſometimes too far. Marius

and CATULUS paſſed the Alpes, met, and defeated the Cimbri beyond the frontiers of Italy. Is it ſafe to conclude from hence, that whenever one people is invaded by another, the invaded ought to meet and fight the invaders at a diſtance from their frontiers? MACHIAVEL's countryman, GUICCIARDIN, was aware of the danger that might ariſe from ſuch an application of examples. PETER of Medicis had involved himſelf in great difficulties, when thoſe wars and calamities began which LEWIS SFORZA firſt drew and entailed on Italy, by flattering the ambition of CHARLES the eighth in order to gratify his own, and calling the French into that country. PETER owed his diſtreſs to his folly in departing from the general tenor of conduct his father LAURENCE had held, and hoped to relieve himſelf by imitating his father's example in one particular inſtance. At a time when the wars with the pope and king of Naples had reduced LAURENCE to circumſtances of great danger, he took the reſolution of going to FERDINAND, and of treating in perſon with that prince. The reſolution appears in hiſtory imprudent and almoſt deſperate: were we informed of the ſecret reaſons on which this great man acted, it would appear very poſſibly a wiſe and ſafe meaſure. It ſucceeded, and LAURENCE brought back with him public peace, and private ſecurity. As ſoon as the French troops entered the dominions of Florence, PETER was ſtruck with a panic terror, went to CHARLES the eighth, put the port of Leghorn, the fortreſſes of Piſa, and all the keys of the country, into this prince's hands; whereby he diſarmed the Florentine commonwealth, and ruined himſelf. He was deprived of his authority, and driven out of the city, by the juſt indignation of the magiſtrates, and people: and in the treaty which they made afterwards with the king of France, it was ſtipulated, that PETER ſhould not remain within an hundred miles of the ſtate, nor his brothers within the ſame diſtance of the city of Florence.

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On this occaſion GUICCIARDIN obſerves, how dangerous it is to govern ourſelves by particular examples; ſince to have the ſame ſucceſs, we muſt have the ſame prudence, and the ſame fortune; and ſince the example muſt not only anſwer the caſe before us in general, but in every minute circumſtance. This is the ſenſe of that admirable hiſtorian, and theſe are his words ----- " é ſenza dubio molto pericoloſo il governarſi con gl' " eſempi, ſe non concorrono, non ſolo in generale, ma in " tutti i particulari, le medeſime ragioni; ſe le coſe non ſono " regolate con la medeſima prudenza, & ſe oltre a tutti li altri " fondamenti, non, v'ha la parte ſua la medeſima fortuna." An obſervation that BOILEAU makes, and a rule he lays down in ſpeaking of tranſlations, will properly find their place here, and ſerve to explain ſtill better what I would eſtabliſh. " To " tranſlate ſervilely into modern language an ancient author " phraſe by phraſe, and word by word, is prepoſterous: no- " thing can be more unlike the original than ſuch a copy. It " is not to ſhew, it is to diſguiſe the author: and he who has " known him only in this dreſs, would not know him in his " own. A good writer, inſtead of taking this inglorious and " unprofitable taſk upon him, will jouſter contre l'original, " rather imitate than tranſlate, and rather emulate than imi- " tate: he will transfuſe the ſenſe and ſpirit of the original " into his own work, and will endeavour to write as the an- " cient author would have wrote, had he writ in the ſame " language." Now, to improve by examples is to improve by imitation. We muſt catch the ſpirit, if we can, and conform ourſelves to the reaſon of them; but we muſt not affect to tranſlate ſervilely into our conduct, if your lordſhip will allow me the expreſſion, the particular conduct of thoſe good and great men, whoſe images hiſtory ſets before us. CODRUS and the DECII devoted themſelves to death: one, becauſe an oracle had foretold that the army whoſe general was

killed would be victorious; the others in compliance with a ſuperſtition that bore great analogy to a ceremony practiſed in the old Egyptian church, and added afterwards, as many others of the ſame origin were, to the ritual of the Iſraelites. Theſe are examples of great magnanimity, to be ſure, and of magnanimity employed in the moſt worthy cauſe. In the early days of the Athenian and Roman government, when the credit of oracles and all kinds of ſuperſtition prevailed, when heaven was piouſly thought to delight in blood, and even human blood was ſhed under wild notions of atonement, propitiation, purgation, expiation, and ſatisfaction; they who ſet ſuch examples as theſe, acted an heroical and a rational part too. But if a general ſhould act the ſame part now, and, in order to ſecure his victory, get killed as faſt as he could; he might paſs for an hero, but, I am ſure, he would paſs for a madman. Even theſe examples, however, are of uſe: they excite us at leaſt to venture our lives freely in the ſervice of our country, by propoſing to our imitation men who devoted themſelves to certain death in the ſervice of theirs. They ſhew us what a turn of imagination can operate, and how the greateſt trifle, nay the greateſt abſurdity, dreſſed up in the ſolemn airs of religion, can carry ardor and confidence, or the contrary ſentiments, into the breaſts of thouſands.

THERE are certain general principles, and rules of life and conduct, which always muſt be true, becauſe they are conformable to the invariable nature of things. He who ſtudies hiſtory as he would ſtudy philoſophy, will ſoon diſtinguiſh and collect them, and by doing ſo will ſoon form to himſelf a general ſyſtem of ethics and politics on the ſureſt foundations, on the trial of theſe principles and rules in all ages, and on the confirmation of them by univerſal experience. I ſaid he will diſtinguiſh them; for once more I muſt ſay, that as

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to particular modes of actions, and meaſures of conduct, which the cuſtoms of different countries, the manners of different ages, and the circumſtances of different conjunctures, have appropriated, as it were; it is always ridiculous, or imprudent and dangerous, to employ them. But this is not all. By contemplating the vaſt variety of particular characters and events; by examining the ſtrange combinations of cauſes, different, remote and ſeemingly oppoſite, that often concur in producing one effect; and the ſurpriſing fertility of one ſingle and uniform cauſe in the producing of a multitude of effects as different, as remote, and ſeemingly as oppoſite; by tracing carefully, as carefully as if the ſubject he conſiders were of perſonal and immediate concern to him, all the minute and ſometimes ſcarce perceivable circumſtances, either in the characters of actors, or in the courſe of actions, that hiſtory enables him to trace, and according to which the ſucceſs of affairs, even the greateſt, is moſtly determined; by theſe, and ſuch methods as theſe, for I might deſcend into a much greater detail, a man of parts may improve the ſtudy of hiſtory to its proper and principal uſe; he may ſharpen the penetration, fix the attention of his mind, and ſtrengthen his judgment; he may acquire the faculty and the habit of diſcerning quicker, and looking farther; and of exerting that flexibility, and ſteadineſs, which are neceſſary to be joined in the conduct of all affairs that depend on the concurrence or oppoſition of other men.

Mr. Locke, I think, recommends the ſtudy of geometry even to thoſe who have no deſign of being geometricians: and he gives a reaſon for it, that may be applied to the preſent caſe. Such perſons may forget every problem that has been propoſed, and every ſolution that they or others have given; but the habit of purſuing long trains of ideas will remain with

them, and they will pierce through the mazes of ſophiſm, and diſcover a latent truth, where perſons who have not this habit will never find it.

In this manner the ſtudy of hiſtory will prepare us for action and obſervation. Hiſtory is the ancient author: experience is the modern language. We form our taſte on the firſt; we tranſlate the ſenſe and reaſon, we transfuſe the ſpirit and force; but we imitate only the particular graces of the original; we imitate them according to the idiom of our own tongue, that is, we ſubſtitute often equivalents in the lieu of them, and are far from affecting to copy them ſervilely. To conclude, as experience is converſant about the preſent, and the preſent enables us to gueſs at the future; ſo hiſtory is converſant about the paſt, and by knowing the things that have been, we become better able to judge of the things that are.

This uſe, my lord, which I make the proper and principal uſe of the ſtudy of hiſtory, is not inſiſted on by thoſe who have writ concerning the method to be followed in this ſtudy: and ſince we propoſe different ends, we muſt of courſe take different ways. Few of their treatiſes have fallen into my hands: one, the method of Bodin, a man famous in his time, I remember to have red. I took it up with much expectation many years ago; I went through it, and remained extremely diſappointed. He might have given almoſt any other title to his book as properly as that which ſtands before it. There are not many pages in it that relate any more to his ſubject than a tedious fifth chapter, wherein he accounts for the characters of nations according to their poſitions on the globe, and according to the influence of the ſtars; and aſſures his reader that nothing can be more

neceſſary than ſuch a diſquiſition, " ad univerſam hiſtoriarum " cognitionem, et incorruptum earum judicium." In his method, we are to take firſt a general view of univerſal hiſtory, and chronology, in ſhort abſtracts, and then to ſtudy all particular hiſtories and ſyſtems. SENECA ſpeaks of men who ſpend their whole lives in learning how to act in life, " dum vitae inſtrumenta conquirunt." I doubt that this method of BODIN would conduct us in the ſame, or as bad a way; would leave us no time for action, or would make us unfit for it. A huge common-place book, wherein all the remarkable ſayings and facts that we find in hiſtory are to be regiſtred, may enable a man to talk or write like BODIN, but will never make him a better man, nor enable him to promote, like an uſeful citizen, the ſecurity, the peace, the welfare, or the grandeur of the community to which he belongs. I ſhall proceed therefore to ſpeak of a method that leads to ſuch purpoſes as theſe directly and certainly, without any regard to the methods that have been preſcribed by others.

I THINK then we muſt be on our guard againſt this very affectation of learning, and this very wantonneſs of curioſity, which the examples and precepts we commonly meet with are calculated to flatter and indulge. We muſt neither dwell too long in the dark, nor wander about till we loſe our way in the light. We are too apt to carry ſyſtems of philoſophy beyond all our ideas, and ſyſtems of hiſtory beyond all our memorials. The philoſopher begins with reaſon, and ends with imagination. The hiſtorian inverts this order: he begins without memorials and he ſometimes ends with them. This ſilly cuſtom is ſo prevalent among men of letters who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and has ſo much prejudice and ſo much authority on the ſide of it, that your lordſhip muſt give me leave to ſpeak a little more particularly and plainly

than

than I have done, in favor of common ſenſe againſt an abſurdity which is almoſt ſanctified.

REFLECTIONS

On the ſtate of ancient HISTORY.

THE nature of man, and the conſtant courſe of human affairs, render it impoſſible that the firſt ages of any new nation which forms itſelf, ſhould afford authentic materials for hiſtory. We have none ſuch concerning the originals of any of thoſe nations that actually ſubſiſt. Shall we expect to find them concerning the originals of nations diſperſed, or extinguiſhed, two or three thouſand years ago? If a thread of dark and uncertain traditions, therefore, is made, as it commonly is, the introducton to hiſtory, we ſhould touch it lightly, and run ſwiftly over it, far from inſiſting on it, either as authors or readers. Such introductions are at beſt no more than fanciful preludes, that try the inſtruments, and precede the concert. He muſt be void of judgment, and taſte, one would think, who can take the firſt for true hiſtory, or the laſt for true harmony. And yet ſo it has been, and ſo it is, not in Germany and Holland alone; but in Italy, in France, and in England, where genius has abounded, and taſte has been long refined. Our great ſcholars have dealt and deal in fables at leaſt as much as our poets, with this difference to the diſadvantage of the former, to whom I may apply the remark as juſtly as SENECA applied it to the dialecticians----" triſtius in-" epti ſunt. Illi ex profeſſo laſciviunt; hi agere ſeipſos aliquid " exiſtimant." Learned men, in learned and inquiſitive ages, who poſſeſſed many advantages that we have not, and among others that of being placed ſo many centuries nearer the original

nal truths that are the objects of ſo much laborious ſearch, deſpaired of finding them, and gave fair warning to poſterity, if poſterity would have taken it. The ancient geographers, as PLUTARCH ſays in the life of THESEUS, when they laid down in their maps the little extent of ſea and land that was known to them, left great ſpaces void. In ſome of theſe ſpaces they wrote, Here are ſandy deſerts, in others, Here are impaſſable marſhes, Here is a chain of inhoſpitable mountains, or Here is a frozen ocean. Juſt ſo both he and other hiſtorians, when they related fabulous originals, were not wanting to ſet out the bounds beyond which there was neither hiſtory nor chronology. CENSORINUS has preſerved the diſtinction of three aeras eſtabliſhed by VARRO. This learned Roman antiquary did not determine whether the firſt period had any beginning, but fixed the end of it at the firſt, that is, according to him, the Ogygian, deluge; which he placed, I think, ſome centuries backwarder than JULIUS AFRICANUS thought fit to place it afterwards. To this aera of abſolute darkneſs he ſuppoſed that a kind of twilight ſucceeded, from the Ogygian deluge to the Olympic aera, and this he called the fabulous age. From this vulgar aera when CORAEBUS was crowned victor, and long after the true aera when theſe games were inſtituted by IPHITUS, the Greeks pretend to be able to digeſt their hiſtory with ſome order, clearneſs, and certainty: VARRO therefore looked on it as the break of day, or the beginning of the hiſtorical age. He might do ſo the rather, perhaps, becauſe he included by it the date he likewiſe fixed, or, upon recollection, that the elder CATO had fixed, of the foundation of Rome within the period from which he ſuppoſed that hiſtorical truth was to be found. But yet moſt certain it is, that the hiſtory and chronology of the ages that follow are as confuſed and uncertain, as the hiſtory and chronology of thoſe which immediately precede this aera.

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1. The ſtate of ancient profane hiſtory.

THE Greeks did not begin to write in proſe till PHERECIDES of Syros introduced the cuſtom: and CADMUS MILESIUS was their firſt hiſtorian. Now theſe men flouriſhed long after the true, or even the vulgar Olympic aera; for JOSEPHUS affirms, and in this he has great probability on his ſide, that CADMUS MILESIUS, and ACUSILAUS ARGIVUS, in a word the oldeſt hiſtorians in Greece, were very little more ancient than the expedition of the Perſians againſt the Greeks. As ſeveral centuries paſſed between the Olympic aera and theſe firſt hiſtorians, there paſſed likewiſe ſeveral more between theſe and the firſt Greek chronologers. TIMOEUS about the time of PTOLOMY PHILADELPHUS, and ERATOSTHENES about that of PTOLOMY EVERGETES, ſeem firſt to have digeſted the events recorded by them, according to the olympiads. Precedent writers mentioned ſometimes the olympiads; but this rule of reckoning was not brought into eſtabliſhed uſe ſooner. The rule could not ſerve to render hiſtory more clear and certain till it was followed: it was not followed till about five hundred years after the Olympic aera. There remains therefore no pretence to place the beginning of the hiſtorical age ſo high as VARRO placed it, by five hundred years.

HELLANICUS indeed and others pretended to give the originals of cities and governments, and to deduce their narrations from great antiquity. Their works are loſt, but we can judge how inconſiderable the loſs is, by the writings of that age which remain, and by the report of thoſe who had ſeen the others. For inſtance, HERODOTUS was cotemporary with HELLANICUS. HERODOTUS was inquiſitive enough in all conſcience, and propoſed to publiſh all he could learn of the antiquities

quities of the Ionians, Lydians, Phrygians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Medes, and Perſians; that is, of almoſt all the nations who were known in his time to exiſt. If he wrote Aſſyriacs, we have them not; but we are ſure that this word was uſed proverbially to ſignify fabulous legends, ſoon after his time, and when the mode of publiſhing ſuch relations and hiſtories prevailed among the Greeks.

In the nine books we have, he goes back indeed almoſt to the Olympic aera, without taking notice of it however; but he goes back only to tell an old woman's tale, of a king who loſt his crown for ſhewing his wife naked to his favorite; and from Candaules and Gyges he haſtens, or rather he takes a great leap, down to Cyrus.

Something like a thread of hiſtory of the Medes and then of the Perſians, to the flight of Xerxes, which happened in his own time, is carried on. The events of his own time are related with an air of hiſtory. But all accounts of the Greeks as well as the Perſians, which precede theſe, and all the accounts which he gives occaſionally of other nations, were drawn up moſt manifeſtly on broken, perplexed, and doubtful ſcraps of tradition. He had neither original records, nor any authentic memorials to guide him, and yet theſe are the ſole foundations of true hiſtory. Herodotus flouriſhed, I think, little more than half a century, and Xenophon little more than a whole century, after the death of Cyrus: and yet how various and repugnant are the relations made by theſe two hiſtorians, of the birth, life, and death of this prince? If more hiſtories had come down from theſe ages to ours, the uncertainty and inutility of them all would be but the more manifeſt. We ſhould find that Acusilaus rejected the traditions of Hesiod, that Hellanicus contradicted Acusilaus,

that EPHORUS accuſed HELLANICUS, that TIMAEUS accuſed EPHORUS, and all poſterior writers TIMAEUS. This is the report of JOSEPHUS. But, in order to ſhew the ignorance and falſhood of all thoſe writers through whom the traditions of profane antiquity came to the Greeks, I will quote to your lordſhip a much better authority than that of JOSEPHUS; the authority of one who had no prejudice to bias him, no particular cauſe to defend, nor ſyſtem of ancient hiſtory to eſtabliſh, and all the helps, as well as talents, neceſſary to make him a competent judge. The man I mean is STRABO.

SPEAKING of the Maſſagetae in his eleventh book, he writes to this effect: that no author had given a true account of them, tho ſeveral had writ of the war that CYRUS waged againſt them; and that hiſtorians had found as little credit in what they had related concerning the affairs of the Perſians, Medes, and Syrians: that this was due to their folly; for obſerving that thoſe who wrote fables profeſſedly were held in eſteem, theſe men imagined they ſhould render their writings more agreeable, if, under the appearance and pretence of true hiſtory, they related what they had neither ſeen nor heard from perſons able to give them true information; and that accordingly their only aim had been to dreſs up pleaſing and marvellous relations: that one may better give credit to HESIOD and HOMER, when they talk of their heroes, nay even to dramatic poets, than to CTESIAS, HERODOTUS, HELLANICUS, and their followers: that it is not ſafe to give credit even to the greateſt part of the hiſtorians who writ concerning ALEXANDER; ſince they too, encouraged by the greater reputation of this conqueror, by the diſtance to which he carried his arms, and by the difficulty of diſproving what they ſaid of actions performed in regions ſo remote, were apt to deceive: that indeed when the Roman empire on one ſide, and the Parthian

Parthian on the other, came to extend themſelves, the truth of things grew to be better known.

You ſee, my lord, not only how late profane hiſtory began to be writ by the Greeks, but how much later it began to be writ with any regard to truth; and conſequently what wretched materials the learned men, who aroſe after the age of ALEXANDER, had to employ, when they attempted to form ſyſtems of ancient hiſtory and chronology. We have ſome remains of that laborious compiler DIODORUS SICULUS, but do we find in him any thread of ancient hiſtory, I mean, that which paſſed for ancient in his time? What complaints, on the contrary, does he not make of former hiſtorians? how frankly does he confeſs the little and uncertain light he had to follow in his reſearches? Yet DIODORUS, as well as PLUTARCH, and others, had not only the older Greek hiſtorians, but the more modern antiquaries, who pretended to have ſearched into the records and regiſters of nations, even at that time renowned for their antiquity. BEROSUS, for inſtance, and MANETHO, one a Babylonian and the other an Egyptian prieſt, had publiſhed the antiquities of their countries in the time of the PTOLEMYS. BEROSUS pretended to give the hiſtory of four hundred and eighty years. PLINY, if I remember right, for I ſay this on memory, ſpeaks to this effect in the ſixth book of his Natural Hiſtory: and if it was ſo, theſe years were probably years of NABONASSAR. MANETHO began his hiſtory, God knows when, from the progreſs of Isis, or ſome other as well aſcertained period. He followed the Egyptian traditions of dynaſties of Gods and Demi-Gods; and derived his anecdotes from the firſt MERCURY, who had inſcribed them in ſacred characters, on antediluvian pillars, antediluvian at leaſt according to our received chronology, from which the ſecond MERCURY had tranſcribed them, and inſerted them into

his works. We have not theſe antiquities; for the monk of VITERBO was ſoon detected: and if we had them, they would either add to our uncertainty, and encreaſe the chaos of learning, or tell us nothing worth our knowledge. For thus I reaſon. Had they given particular and hiſtorical accounts conformable to the ſcriptures of the Jews, JOSEPHUS, JULIUS AFRICANUS, and EUSEBIUS would have made quite other extracts from their writings, and would have altered and contradicted them leſs. The accounts they gave therefore, were repugnant to ſacred writ, or they were defective: they would have eſtabliſhed pyrrhoniſm, or have baulked our curioſity.

2. Of ſacred hiſtory.

WHAT memorials therefore remain to give us light into the originals of ancient nations, and the hiſtory of thoſe ages, we commonly call the firſt ages? The Bible, it will be ſaid; that is, the hiſtorical part of it in the Old teſtament. But, my lord, even theſe divine books muſt be reputed inſufficient to the purpoſe, by every candid and impartial man who conſiders either their authority as hiſtories, or the matter they contain. For what are they? and how came they to us? At the time when ALEXANDER carried his arms into Aſia, a people of Syria, till then unknown, became known to the Greeks: this people had been ſlaves to the Egyptians, Aſſyrians, Medes, and Perſians, as theſe ſeveral empires prevailed: ten parts in twelve of them had been tranſplanted by ancient conquerors, and melted down and loſt in the eaſt, ſeveral ages before the eſtabliſhment of the empire that ALEXANDER deſtroyed: the other two parts had been carried captive to Babylon a little before the ſame aera. This captivity was not indeed perpetual, like the other; but it laſted ſo long, and ſuch circumſtances, whatever

ever they were, accompanied it, that the captives forgot their country, and even their language, the Hebrew dialect at leaſt and character: and a few of them only could be wrought upon, by the zeal of ſome particular men, to return home, when the indulgence of the Perſian monarchs gave them leave to rebuild their city and to repeople their ancient patrimony. Even this remnant of the nation did not continue long entire. Another great tranſmigration followed; and the Jews, that ſettled under the protection of the PTOLEMYS, forgot their language in Egypt, as the forefathers of theſe Jews had forgot theirs in Chaldea. More attached however to their religion in Egypt, for reaſons eaſy to be deduced from the new inſtitutions that prevailed after the captivity among them, than their anceſtors had been in Chaldea, a verſion of their ſacred writings was made into Greek at Alexandria, not long after the canon of theſe ſcriptures had been finiſhed at Jeruſalem; for many years could not intervene between the death of SIMON the juſt, by whom this canon was finiſhed, if he died during the reign of PTOLEMY SOTER, and the beginning of this famous tranſlation under PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS. The Helleniſt Jews reported as many marvellous things to authorize, and even to ſanctify this tranſlation, as the other Jews had reported about ESDRAS who began, and SIMON the juſt who finiſhed, the canon of their ſcriptures. Theſe holy romances ſlid into tradition, and tradition became hiſtory: the fathers of our chriſtian church did not diſdain to employ them. St. JEROME, for inſtance, laughed at the ſtory of the ſeventy-two elders, whoſe tranſlations were found to be, upon compariſon, word for word the ſame, tho made ſeparately, and by men who had no communication with one another. But the ſame St. JEROME, in the ſame place, quotes ARISTEAS, one of the guard of PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS, as a real perſonage.

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THE account pretended to be writ by this ARISTEAS, of all that paſſed relating to the tranſlation, was enough for his purpoſe. This he retained, and he rejected only the more improbable circumſtances, which had been added to the tale, and which laid it open to moſt ſuſpicion. In this he ſhewed great prudence, and better judgment, than that zealous, but weak apologiſt JUSTIN, who believed the whole ſtory himſelf, and endeavored to impoſe it on mankind.

THUS you ſee, my lord, that when we conſider theſe books barely as hiſtories, delivered to us on the faith of a ſuperſtitious people, among whom the cuſtom and art of pious lying prevailed remarkably, we may be allowed to doubt whether greater credit is to be given to what they tell us concerning the original, compiled in their own country and as it were out of the ſight of the reſt of the world; than we know, with ſuch a certainty as no ſcholar preſumes to deny, that we ought to give to what they tell us concerning the copy?

THE Helleniſt Jews were extremely pleaſed, no doubt, to have their ſcriptures in a language they underſtood, and that might ſpread the fame of their antiquity, and do honor to their nation, among their maſters the Greeks. But yet we do not find that the authority of theſe books prevailed, or that even they were much known among the Pagan world. The reaſon of this cannot be, that the Greeks admired nothing that was not of their own growth, "ſua tantum mirantur:" for, on the contrary, they were inquiſitive and credulous in the higheſt degree, and they collected and publiſhed at leaſt as many idle traditions of other nations, as they propagated of their own. JOSEPHUS pretended that THEOPOMPUS, a diſciple of ISOCRATES being about to inſert in his hiſtory ſome things he had taken out of holy writ, the poor man became troubled in mind for

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ſeveral days; and that having prayed to God, during an intermiſſion of his illneſs, to reveal to him the cauſe of it, he learned in his ſleep that this attempt was the cauſe; upon which he quitted the deſign and was cured. If Josepuus had been a little more conſiſtent than he is very often, ſuch a ſtory as this would not have been told by one, who was fond, as Jews and Chriſtians in general have been, to create an opinion that the Gentiles took not their hiſtory alone, but their philoſophy and all their valuable knowledge, from the Jews. Notwithſtanding this ſtory therefore, which is told in the fifteenth book of the Jewiſh antiquities, and means nothing, or means to ſhew that the divine providence would not ſuffer anecdotes of ſacred to be mingled with profane hiſtory; the practice of Josephus himſelf, and of all thoſe who have had the ſame deſign in view, has been to confirm the former by the latter, and at any rate to ſuppoſe an appearance at leaſt of conformity between them. We are told Hecateus Abderita, for there were two of that name, writ a hiſtory favorable to the Jews: and, not to multiply inſtances, tho I might eaſily do it, even Alexander Polyhistor is called in. He is quoted by Josephus, and praiſed by Eusebius as a man of parts and great variety of learning. His teſtimony, about the deluge and tower of Babel, is produced by St. Cyril in his firſt book againſt Julian: and Justin the apologiſt and martyr, in his exhortation to the Greeks, makes uſe of the ſame authority, among thoſe that mention Moses as a leader and prince of the Jews. Tho this Polyhistor, if I remember right what I think I have met with in Suidas, ſpoke only of a woman he called Moso, "cujus ſcriptum eſt lex hebraeorum*." Had the

* Μωσὼ, γυνὴ Ἑβραία· ἧς ἐστι συγγραμμα ὁ παρ᾽ Ἑβραίοις νομος· ὡς φησιν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Μιλήσιος ὁ Πολυΐστωρ. Sui. Lex. tom. ii. p. 583.

Ἀλέξανδρος . . . ὁς Πολυΐστωρ . . . συνέγραψε βιβλία ἀριθμῷ πρείττω. καὶ περὶ Ῥώμης βιβλία πέντε. ἐν τούτοις λέγει, ὡς γυνὴ γέγονεν Ἑβραία Μωσὼ, ἧς ἐστι σύγγραμμα ὁ παρ᾽ Ἑβραίοις νομος. Id. tom. i. p. 105. Edit. Cantab. 1725.

the Greek hiſtorians been conformable to the ſacred, I cannot ſee that their authority, which was not cotemporary, would have been of any weight. They might have copied MOSES, and ſo they did CTESIAS. But even this was not the caſe: whatever uſe a particular writer here and there might make occaſionally of the ſcriptures, certain it is that the Jews continued to be as much deſpiſed, and their hiſtory to be as generally neglected, nay almoſt as generally unknown, for a long time at leaſt after the verſion was made at Alexandria, as they had been before. APION, an Egyptian, a man of much erudition, appeared in the world ſome centuries afterwards. He wrote, among other antiquities, thoſe of his own country: and as he was obliged to ſpeak very often of the Jews, he ſpoke of them in a manner neither much to their honor, nor to that of their hiſtories. He wrote purpoſely againſt them: and JOSEPHUS attempted afterwards, but APION was then dead, to refute him. APION paſſed, I know, for a vain and noiſy pedant; but he paſſed likewiſe for a curious, a laborious, and a learned antiquary. If he was cabaliſtical or ſuperſtitious, JOSEPHUS was at leaſt as much ſo as he: and if he flattered CALIGULA, JOSEPHUS introduced himſelf to the court of NERO and the favor of POPPAEA, by no very honorable means, under the protection of ALITURUS, a player, and a Jew; to ſay nothing of his applying to VESPASIAN the prophecies concerning the Meſſiah, nor of his accompanying TITUS to the ſiege of Jeruſalem.

IN ſhort, my lord, the Jewiſh hiſtory never obtained any credit in the world, till chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed. The foundations of this ſyſtem being laid partly in theſe hiſtories, and in the prophecies joined to them or inſerted in them, chriſtianity has reflected back upon them an authority which they had not before, and this authority has prevailed where-

ever

ever chriſtianity has ſpred. Both Jews and Chriſtians hold the ſame books in great veneration, whilſt each condemns the other for not underſtanding, or for abuſing them. But I apprehend that the zeal of both has done much hurt, by endeavoring to extend their authority much farther than is neceſſary for the ſupport perhaps of Judaiſm, but to be ſure of chriſtianity. I explain myſelf that I may offend no pious ear.

Simon, in the preface of his critical hiſtory of the Old teſtament, cites a divine of the faculty of Paris, who held that the inſpirations of the authors of thoſe books, which the church receives as the word of God, ſhould be extended no farther than to matters purely of doctrine, or to ſuch as have a near and neceſſary relation to theſe; and that whenever theſe authors writ on other ſubjects, ſuch as Egyptian, Aſſyrian, or other hiſtory, they had no more of the divine aſſiſtance than any other perſons of piety. This notion of inſpirations that came occaſionally, that illuminated the minds and guided the hands of the ſacred penmen while they were writing one page, and reſtrained their influence while the ſame authors were writing another, may be cavilled againſt: and what is there that may not? But ſurely it deſerves to be treated with reſpect, ſince it tends to eſtabliſh a diſtinction between the legal, doctrinal, or prophetical parts of the Bible, and the hiſtorical: without which diſtinction it is impoſſible to eſtabliſh the firſt, as evidently and as ſolidly as the intereſts of religion require: at leaſt it appears impoſſible to me, after having examined and conſidered, as well as I am able, all the trials of this kind that have been made by ſubtile as well as learned men. The Old is ſaid to be the foundation of the New, and ſo it is in one ſenſe: the ſyſtem of religion contained in the latter, refers to the ſyſtem of religion contained in

the former, and ſuppoſes the truth of it. But the authority on which we receive the books of the New teſtament, is ſo far from being founded on the authority of the Old teſtament, that it is quite independent on it; the New being proved, gives authority to the Old, but borrows none from it; and gives this authority to the particular parts only. CHRIST came to fulfil the prophecies; but not to conſecrate all the written, any more than the oral, traditions of the Jews. We muſt believe theſe traditions as far as they relate to chriſtianity, as far as chriſtianity refers to them, or ſuppoſes them neceſſary; but we can be under no obligation to believe them any farther, ſince without chriſtianity we ſhould be under no obligation to believe them at all.

IT hath been ſaid by ABBADIE, and others, "That the "accidents which have happened to alter the texts of the "Bible, and to diſfigure, if I may ſay ſo, the ſcriptures in "many reſpects, could not have been prevented without a "perpetual ſtanding miracle, and that a perpetual ſtanding "miracle is not in the order of providence." Now I can by no means ſubſcribe to this opinion. It ſeems evident to my reaſon that the very contrary muſt be true; if we ſuppoſe that GOD acts towards men according to the moral fitneſs of things: and if we ſuppoſe that he acts arbitrarily, we can form no opinion at all. I think that theſe accidents would not have happened, or that the ſcriptures would have been preſerved entirely in their genuine purity notwithſtanding theſe accidents, if they had been entirely dictated by the HOLY GHOST: and the proof of this probable propoſition, according to our cleareſt and moſt diſtinct ideas of wiſdom and moral fitneſs, is obvious and eaſy. But theſe ſcriptures are not ſo come down to us: they are come down broken

broken and confuſed, full of additions, interpolations, and tranſpoſitions, made we neither know when, nor by whom; and ſuch, in ſhort, as never appeared on the face of any other book, on whoſe authority men have agreed to rely.

THIS being ſo, my lord, what hypotheſis ſhall we follow? Shall we adhere to ſome ſuch diſtinction as I have mentioned? Shall we ſay, for inſtance, that the ſcriptures were written originally by the authors to whom they are vulgarly aſcribed, but that theſe authors writ nothing by inſpiration, except the legal, the doctrinal, and the prophetical parts, and that in every other reſpect their authority is purely human, and therefore fallible? Or ſhall we ſay that theſe hiſtories are nothing more than compilations of old traditions, and abridgments of old records, made in later times, as they appear to every one who reads them without prepoſſeſſion, and with attention? Shall we add, that which ever of theſe probabilities be true, we may believe, conſiſtently with either, notwithſtanding the deciſion of any divines, who know no more than you or I, or any other man, of the order of providence, that all thoſe parts and paſſages of the Old teſtament which contain prophecies, or matters of law or doctrine, and which were from the firſt of ſuch importance in the deſigns of providence to all future generations, and even to the whole race of mankind, have been from the firſt the peculiar care of providence? Shall we inſiſt that ſuch particular parts and paſſages, which are plainly marked out and ſufficiently confirmed by the ſyſtem of the chriſtian revelation, and by the completion of the prophecies, have been preſerved from corruption by ways impenetrable to us, amidſt all the changes and chances to which the books wherein they are recorded have been expoſed; and that neither original writers, nor later compilers, have been ſuffered to make any eſſential alterations, ſuch as would have

falſified the law of God and the principles of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian religions, in any of theſe divine fundamental truths? Upon ſuch hypotheſes, we may aſſert without ſcruple, that the genealogies and hiſtories of the Old teſtament are in no reſpect ſufficient foundations for a chronology from the beginning of time, nor for univerſal hiſtory. But then the ſame hypotheſes will ſecure the infallibility of ſcripture authority as far as religion is concerned. Faith and reaſon may be reconciled a little better than they commonly are. I may deny that the Old teſtament is tranſmitted to us under all the conditions of an authentic hiſtory, and yet be at liberty to maintain that the paſſages in it which eſtabliſh original ſin, which ſeem favorable to the doctrine of the Trinity, which foretell the coming of the Meſſiah, and all others of ſimilar kind, are come down to us as they were originally dictated by the Holy Ghost.

In attributing the whole credibility of the Old teſtament to the authority of the New, and in limiting the authenticity of the Jewiſh ſcriptures to thoſe parts alone that concern law, doctrine, and prophecy, by which their chronology and the far greateſt part of their hiſtory are excluded, I will venture to aſſure your lordſhip that I do not aſſume ſo much, as is aſſumed in every hypotheſis that affixes the divine ſeal of inſpiration to the whole canon; that reſts the whole proof on Jewiſh veracity; and that pretends to account particularly and poſitively for the deſcent of theſe ancient writings in their preſent ſtate.

Another reaſon, for which I have inſiſted the rather on the diſtinction ſo often mentioned, is this. I think we may find very good foundation for it even in the bible: and tho this be a point very little attended to, and much diſguiſed, it would

would not be hard to ſhew, upon great inducements of probability, that the law and the hiſtory were far from being blended together as they now ſtand in the Pentateuch, even from the time of Moses down to that of Esdras. But the principal and deciſive reaſon for ſeparating in ſuch manner the legal, doctrinal, and prophetical parts, from the hiſtorical, is the neceſſity of having ſome rule to go by: and, I proteſt, I know of none that is yet agreed upon. I content myſelf therefore to fix my opinion concerning the authority of the Old teſtament in this manner, and carry it thus far only. We muſt do ſo, or we muſt enter into that labyrinth of diſpute and contradiction, wherein even the moſt orthodox Jews and Chriſtians have wandered ſo many ages, and ſtill wander. It is ſtrange, but it is true; not only the Jews differ from the Chriſtians, but Jews and Chriſtians both differ among themſelves, concerning almoſt every point that is neceſſary to be certainly known and agreed upon, in order to eſtabliſh the authority of books which both have received already as authentic and ſacred. So that whoever takes the pains to read what learned men have writ on this ſubject, will find that they leave the matter as doubtful as they took it up. Who were the authors of theſe ſcriptures, when they were publiſhed, how they were compoſed and preſerved, or renewed, to uſe a remarkable expreſſion of the famous Huet in his Demonſtration; in fine, how they were loſt during the captivity, and how they were retrieved after it, are all matters of controverſy to this day.

It would be eaſy for me to deſcend into a greater detail, and to convince your lordſhip of what I have been ſaying in general by an induction of particulars, even without any other help than that of a few notes which I took when I applied myſelf to this examination, and which now lye before me. But

But ſuch a digreſſion would carry me too far: and I fear that you will think I have ſaid already more than enough upon this part of my ſubject. I go on therefore to obſerve to your lordſhip, that if the hiſtory of the Old teſtament was as exact and as authentic, as the ignorance and impudence of ſome rabbies have made them aſſert that it is: if we could believe with them that MOSES wrote every ſyllable in the Pentateuch as it now ſtands, or that all the pſalms were written by DAVID: nay, if we could believe, with PHILO and JOSEPHUS, that MOSES wrote the account of his own death and ſepulture, and made a ſort of a funeral panegyric on himſelf, as we find them in the laſt chapter of Deuteronomy; yet ſtill would I venture to aſſert, that he who expects to find a ſyſtem of chronology, or a thread of hiſtory, or ſufficient materials for either, in the books of the Old teſtament, expects to find what the authors of theſe books, whoever they were, never intended. They are extracts of genealogies, not genealogies; extracts of hiſtories, not hiſtories. The Jews themſelves allow their genealogies to be very imperfect, and produce examples of omiſſions and errors in them, which denote ſufficiently that theſe genealogies are extracts, wherein every generation in the courſe of deſcent is not mentioned. I have red ſomewhere, perhaps in the works of St. JEROME, that this father juſtifies the opinion of thoſe who think it impoſſible to fix any certain chronology on that of the bible: and this opinion will be juſtified ſtill better, to the underſtanding of every man that conſiders how groſly the Jews blunder whenever they meddle with chronology; for this plain reaſon, becauſe their ſcriptures are imperfect in this reſpect, and becauſe they rely on their oral, to rectify and ſupply their written, traditions: that is, they rely on traditions compiled long after the canon of their ſcriptures, but deemed by them of equal antiquity and authority. Thus, for inſtance, DANIEL and SIMON the juſt, according to them were

were members at the ſame time of the great ſynagogue which began and finiſhed the canon of the Old teſtament, under the preſidency of ESDRAS. This ESDRAS was the prophet MALACHI. DARIUS the ſon of HYSTASPES was ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS; he was AHASUERUS, and he was the ſame DARIUS whom ALEXANDER conquered. This may ſerve as a ſample of Jewiſh chronology, formed on their ſcriptures which afford inſufficient lights, and on their traditions which afford falſe lights. We are indeed more correct, and come nearer to the truth in theſe inſtances, perhaps in ſome others, becauſe we make uſe of profane chronology to help us. But profane chronology is itſelf ſo modern, ſo precarious, that this help does not reach to the greateſt part of that time to which ſacred chronology extends; that when it begins to help, it begins to perplex us too; and finally, that even with this help we ſhould not have had ſo much as the appearance of a complete chronological ſyſtem, and the ſame may be ſaid of univerſal hiſtory, if learned men had not proceeded very wiſely, on one uniform maxim, from the firſt ages of chriſtianity, when a cuſtom of ſanctifying profane learning, as well as profane rites, which the Jews had imprudently laid aſide, was taken up by the Chriſtians. The maxim I mean is this, that profane authority be admitted without ſcruple or doubt, whenever it ſays, or whenever it can be made to ſay, if not "totidem verbis," yet "totidem ſyllabis," or "totidem lite-"ris" at leaſt, or whenever it can be made by any interpretation to mean, what confirms, or ſupplies in a conſiſtent manner, the holy writ; and that the ſame authority be rejected, when nothing of this kind can be done, but the contradiction or inconſiſtency remains irreconcileable. Such a liberty as this would not be allowed in any other caſe; becauſe it ſuppoſes the very thing that is to be proved. But we ſee it taken,

taken, very properly to be ſure, in favor of ſacred and infallible writings, when they are compared with others.

In order to perceive with the utmoſt evidence, that the ſcope and deſign of the author or authors of the Pentateuch, and of the other books of the Old teſtament, anſwer as little the purpoſe of antiquaries, in hiſtory, as in chronology, it will be ſufficient briefly to call to mind the ſum of what they relate, from the creation of the world to the eſtabliſhment of the Perſian empire. If the antediluvian world continued one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty ſix years, and if the vocation of Abraham is to be placed four hundred and twenty ſix years below the deluge, theſe twenty centuries make almoſt two thirds of the period mentioned: and the whole hiſtory of them is comprized in eleven ſhort chapters of Geneſis; which is certainly the moſt compendious extract that ever was made. If we examine the contents of theſe chapters, do we find any thing like an univerſal hiſtory, or ſo much as an abridgment of it? Adam and Eve were created, they broke the commandment of God, they were driven out of the garden of Eden, one of their ſons killed his brother, but their race ſoon multiplied and peopled the earth. What geography now have we, what hiſtory of this antediluvian world? Why, none. The ſons of God, it is ſaid, lay with the daughters of men, and begot giants, and God drowned all the inhabitants of the earth, except one family. After this we read that the earth was repeopled; but theſe children of one family were divided into ſeveral languages, even whilſt they lived together, ſpoke the ſame language, and were employed in the ſame work. Out of one of the countries into which they diſperſed themſelves, Chaldea, God called Abraham ſome time afterwards, with magnificent promiſes, and conducted him to a country called Chanaan.

Chanaan. Did this author, my lord, intend an univerſal hiſtory? Certainly not. The tenth chapter of Geneſis names indeed ſome of the generations deſcending from the ſons of NOAH, ſome of the cities founded, and ſome of the countries planted by them. But what are bare names, naked of circumſtances, without deſcriptions of countries, or relations of events? They furniſh matter only for gueſs and diſpute; and even the ſimilitude of them, which is often uſed as a clue to lead us to the diſcovery of hiſtorical truth, has notoriouſly contributed to propagate error, and to encreaſe the perplexity of ancient tradition. Theſe imperfect and dark accounts have not furniſhed matter for gueſs and diſpute alone; but a much worſe uſe has been made of them by Jewiſh rabbies, Chriſtian fathers, and Mahometan doctors, in their profane extenſions of this part of the Moſaic hiſtory. The creation of the firſt man is deſcribed by ſome, as if, Preadamites, they had aſſiſted at it. They talk of his beauty as if they had ſeen him, of his gigantic ſize as if they had meaſured him, and of his prodigious knowledge as if they had converſed with him. They point out the very ſpot where EVE laid her head the firſt time he enjoyed her. They have minutes of the whole converſation between this mother of mankind, who damned her children before ſhe bore them, and the ſerpent. Some are poſitive that CAIN quarrelled with ABEL about a point of doctrine, and others affirm that the diſpute roſe about a girl. A great deal of ſuch ſtuff may be eaſily collected about ENOCH, about NOAH, and about the ſons of NOAH; but I wave any farther mention of ſuch impertinencies as BONZES or TALAPOINS would almoſt bluſh to relate. Upon the whole matter, if we may gueſs at the deſign of an author by the contents of his book, the deſign of MOSES, or of the author of the hiſtory aſcribed to him, in this part of it, was to inform the people of Iſrael of their deſcent from NOAH by SEM, and of NOAH's from ADAM

by SETH; to illuſtrate their original; to eſtabliſh their claim to the land of Chanaan, and to juſtify all the cruelties committed by JOSHUA in the conqueſt of the Chanaanites, in whom, ſays BOCHART, "the prophecy of NOAH was com-" pleted, when they were ſubdued by the Iſraelites, who had " been ſo long ſlaves to the Egyptians."

ALLOW me to make, as I go along, a ſhort reflection or two on this prophecy, and the completion of it, as they ſtand recorded in the Pentateuch, out of many that might be made. The terms of the prophecy then are not very clear: and the curſe pronounced in it contradicts all our notions of order and of juſtice. One is tempted to think, that the patriarch was ſtill drunk; and that no man in his ſenſes could hold ſuch language, or paſs ſuch a ſentence. Certain it is, that no writer but a Jew could impute to the oeconomy of divine providence the accompliſhment of ſuch a prediction, nor make the Supreme Being the executor of ſuch a curſe.

HAM alone offended; CHANAAN was innocent; for the Hebrew and other doctors who would make the ſon an accomplice with his father, affirm not only without, but againſt the expreſs authority of the text. CHANAAN was however alone curſed: and he became, according to his grandfather's prophecy, "a ſervant of ſervants," that is, the vileſt and worſt of ſlaves (for I take theſe words in a ſenſe, if not the moſt natural, the moſt favorable to the prophecy, and the leaſt abſurd) to SEM, tho not to JAPHET, when the Iſraelites conquered Paleſtine; to one of his uncles, not to his brethren. Will it be ſaid----it has been ſaid----that where we read CHANAAN we are to underſtand HAM, whoſe brethren SEM and JAPHET were? At this rate, we ſhall never know what we read: as theſe critics never care what they ſay. Will

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it be ſaid----this has been ſaid too----that HAM was puniſhed in his poſterity, when CHANAAN was curſed, and his deſcendants were exterminated? But who does not ſee that the curſe, and the puniſhment, in this caſe, fell on CHANAAN and his poſterity, excluſively of the reſt of the poſterity of HAM; and were therefore the curſe and puniſhment of the ſon, not of the father, properly? The deſcendants of MESRAIM, another of his ſons, were the Egyptians: and they were ſo far from being ſervants of ſervants to their couſins the Semites, that theſe were ſervants of ſervants to them, during more than fourſcore years. Why the poſterity of CHANAAN was to be deemed an accurſed race, it is eaſy to account; and I have mentioned it juſt now. But it is not ſo eaſy to account, why the poſterity of the righteous SEM, that great example of filial reverence, became ſlaves to another branch of the family of HAM.

IT would not be worth while to lengthen this tedious letter, by ſetting down any more of the contents of the hiſtory of the bible. Your lordſhip may pleaſe to call the ſubſtance of it to your mind, and your native candor and love of truth will oblige you then to confeſs, that theſe ſacred books do not aim, in any part of them, at any thing like univerſal chronology and hiſtory. They contain a very imperfect account of the Iſraelites themſelves; of their ſettlement in the land of promiſe, of which, by the way, they never had entire, and ſcarce ever peaceable poſſeſſion; of their diviſions, apoſtaſies, repentances, relapſes, triumphs, and defeats, under the occaſional government of their judges, and under that of their kings; of the Galilean and Samaritan captivities, into which they were carried by the kings of Aſſyria, and of that which was brought on the remnant of this people when the kingdom of Judah was deſtroyed by thoſe princes who governed the empire founded on the union of Nineveh and Babylon.

Theſe things are all related, your lordſhip knows, in a very ſummary and confuſed manner: and we learn ſo little of other nations by theſe accounts, that if we did not borrow ſome light from the traditions of other nations, we ſhould ſcarce underſtand them. One particular obſervation, and but one, I will make, to ſhew what knowledge in the hiſtory of mankind, and in the computation of time, may be expected from theſe books. The Aſſyrians were their neighbours, powerful neighbours, with whom they had much and long to do. Of this empire therefore, if of any thing, we might hope to find ſome ſatisfactory accounts. What do we find? The ſcripture takes no notice of any Aſſyrian kingdom, till juſt before the time when profane hiſtory makes that empire to end. Then we hear of PHUL, of TEGLATH-PHALASSER, who was perhaps the ſame perſon, and of SALMANASER, who took Samaria in the twelfth of the æra of NABONASSER, that is, twelve years after the Aſſyrian empire was no more. SENACHERIB ſucceeds to him, and ASSERHADDON to SENACHERIB. What ſhall we ſay to this apparent contrariety? If the ſilence of the bible creates a ſtrong preſumption againſt the firſt, may not the ſilence of profane authority create ſome againſt the ſecond Aſſyrian monarchs? The pains that are taken to perſuade, that there is room enough between SARDANAPALUS and CYRUS for the ſecond, will not reſolve the difficulty. Something much more plauſible may be ſaid, but even this will be hypothetical, and liable to great contradiction. So that, upon the whole matter, the ſcriptures are ſo far from giving us light into general hiſtory, that they encreaſe the obſcurity even of thoſe parts to which they have the neareſt relation. We have therefore neither in profane nor in ſacred authors ſuch authentic, clear, diſtinct, and full accounts of the originals of ancient nations, and of the great events of thoſe ages that are commonly called the firſt ages, as deſerve

to go by the name of hiſtory, or as afford ſufficient materials for chronology and hiſtory.

I MIGHT now proceed to obſerve to your lordſhip how this has happened, not only by the neceſſary conſequences of human nature, and the ordinary courſe of human affairs, but by the policy, artifice, corruption, and folly of mankind. But this would be to heap digreſſion upon digreſſion, and to preſume too much on your patience. I ſhall therefore content myſelf to apply theſe reflections on the ſtate of ancient hiſtory to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and to the method to be obſerved in it; as ſoon as your lordſhip has reſted yourſelf a little after reading, and I after writing ſo long a letter.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER IV.

I. That there is in hiſtory ſufficient authenticity to render it uſeful, notwithſtanding all objections to the contrary.

II. Of the method and due reſtrictions to be obſerved in the ſtudy of it.

WHETHER the letter I now begin to write will be long or ſhort, I know not: but I find my memory is refreſhed, my imagination warmed, and matter flows in ſo faſt upon me, that I have not time to preſs it cloſe. Since therefore you have provoked me to write, you muſt be content to take what follows.

I HAVE obſerved already that we are apt naturally to apply to ourſelves what has happened to other men, and that examples take their force from hence; as well thoſe which hiſtory, as thoſe which experience, offers to our reflection. What we do not believe to have happened therefore, we ſhall not thus apply: and for want of the ſame application, ſuch examples will not have the ſame effect. Antient hiſtory, ſuch antient hiſtory as I have deſcribed, is quite unfit therefore in this

this reſpect to anſwer the ends that every reaſonable man ſhould propoſe to himſelf in this ſtudy; becauſe ſuch antient hiſtory will never gain ſufficient credit with any reaſonable man. A tale well told, or a comedy or a tragedy well wrought up, may have a momentary effect upon the mind, by heating the imagination, ſurprizing the judgment, and affecting ſtrongly the paſſions. The Athenians are ſaid to have been tranſported into a kind of martial phrenzy by the repreſentation of a tragedy of AESCHYLUS, and to have marched under this influence from the theatre to the plains of MARATHON. Theſe momentary impreſſions might be managed, for aught I know, in ſuch manner as to contribute a little, by frequent repetitions of them, towards maintaining a kind of habitual contempt of folly, deteſtation of vice, and admiration of virtue in well-policed commonwealths. But then theſe impreſſions cannot be made, nor this little effect be wrought, unleſs the fables bear an appearance of truth. When they bear this appearance, reaſon connives at the innocent fraud of imagination; reaſon diſpenſes, in favor of probability, with thoſe ſtrict rules of criticiſm that ſhe has eſtabliſhed to try the truth of fact: but, after all, ſhe receives theſe fables as fables; and as ſuch only ſhe permits imagination to make the moſt of them. If they pretended to be hiſtory, they would be ſoon ſubjected to another and more ſevere examination. What may have happened, is the matter of an ingenious fable: what has happened, is that of an authentic hiſtory: the impreſſions which one or the other makes are in proportion. When imagination grows lawleſs and wild, rambles out of the precincts of nature, and tells of heroes and giants, fairies and enchanters, of events and of phaenomena repugnant to univerſal experience, to our cleareſt and moſt diſtinct ideas, and to all the known laws of nature, reaſon does not connive a moment; but, far from receiving ſuch narrations as hiſtorical, ſhe rejects them as un-

worthy to be placed even among the fabulous. Such narrations therefore cannot make the ſlighteſt momentary impreſſions on a mind fraught with knowledge, and void of ſuperſtition. Impoſed by authority, and aſſiſted by artifice, the deluſion hardly prevails over common ſenſe; blind ignorance almoſt ſees, and raſh ſuperſtition heſitates: nothing leſs than enthuſiaſm and phrenſy can give credit to ſuch hiſtories, or apply ſuch examples. Don QUIXOTE believed; but even SANCHO doubted.

WHAT I have ſaid will not be much controverted by any man who has red AMADIS of Gaul, or has examined our antient traditions without prepoſſeſſion. The truth is, the principal difference between them ſeems to be this. In AMADIS of Gaul, we have a thread of abſurdities that are invented without any regard to probability, and that lay no claim to belief: antient traditions are an heap of fables, under which ſome particular truths, inſcrutable, and therefore uſeleſs to mankind, may lie concealed; which have a juſt pretence to nothing more, and yet impoſe themſelves upon us, and become, under the venerable name of antient hiſtory, the foundations of modern fables, the materials with which ſo many ſyſtems of fancy have been erected.

BUT now, as men are apt to carry their judgments into extremes, there are ſome that will be ready to inſiſt that all hiſtory is fabulous, and that the very beſt is nothing better than a probable tale, artfully contrived, and plauſibly told, wherein truth and falſhood are indiſtinguiſhably blended together. All the inſtances, and all the common-place arguments, that BAYLE and others have employed to eſtabliſh this ſort of Pyrrhoniſm, will be quoted: and from thence it will be concluded, that if the pretended hiſtories of the firſt ages, and

and of the originals of nations, be too improbable and too ill vouched to procure any degree of belief, thoſe hiſtories that have been writ later, that carry a greater air of probability, and that boaſt even cotemporary authority, are at leaſt inſufficient to gain that degree of firm belief, which is neceſſary to render the ſtudy of them uſeful to mankind. But here that happens which often happens: the premiſes are true, and the concluſion is falſe; becauſe a general axiom is eſtabliſhed precariouſly on a certain number of partial obſervations. This matter is of conſequence; for it tends to aſcertain the degrees of aſſent that we may give to hiſtory.

I AGREE then that hiſtory has been purpoſely and ſyſtematically falſified in all ages, and that partiality and prejudice have occaſioned both voluntary and involuntary errors even in the beſt. Let me ſay without offence, my lord, ſince I may ſay it with truth and am able to prove it, that eccleſiaſtical authority has led the way to this corruption in all ages, and all religions. How monſtrous were the abſurdities that the prieſthood impoſed on the ignorance and ſuperſtition of mankind in the Pagan world, concerning the originals of religions and governments, their inſtitutions and rites, their laws and cuſtoms? What opportunities had they for ſuch impoſitions, whilſt the keeping the records and collecting the traditions was in ſo many nations the peculiar office of this order of men? A cuſtom highly extolled by JOSEPHUS, but plainly liable to the groſſeſt frauds, and even a temptation to them. If the foundations of Judaiſm and Chriſtianity have been laid in truth, yet what numberleſs fables have been invented to raiſe, to embelliſh, and to ſupport theſe ſtructures, according to the intereſt and taſte of the ſeveral architects? That the Jews have been guilty of this will be allowed: and, to the ſhame of chriſtians, if not of chriſtianity,

the fathers of one church have no right to throw the firſt ſtone at the fathers of the other. Deliberate ſyſtematical lying has been practiſed and encouraged from age to age; and among all the pious frauds that have been employed to maintain a reverence and zeal for their religion in the minds of men, this abuſe of hiſtory has been one of the principal and moſt ſucceſsful: an evident and experimental proof, by the way, of what I have inſiſted upon ſo much, the aptitude and natural tendency of hiſtory to form our opinions, and to ſettle our habits. This righteous expedient was in ſo much uſe and repute in the Greek church, that one METAPHRASTUS wrote a treatiſe on the art of compoſing holy romances: the fact, if I remember right, is cited by BAILLET in his book of the lives of the ſaints. He and other learned men of the Roman church have thought it of ſervice to their cauſe, ſince the reſurrection of letters, to detect ſome impoſtures, and to depoſe, or to unniche, according to the French expreſſion, now and then a reputed ſaint; but they ſeem in doing this to mean no more than a ſort of compoſition: they give up ſome fables that they may defend others with greater advantage, and they make truth ſerve as a ſtalking-horſe to error. The ſame ſpirit that prevailed in the Eaſtern church, prevailed in the Weſtern, and prevails ſtill. A ſtrong proof of it appeared lately in the country where I am. A ſudden fury of devotion ſeized the people of Paris for a little prieſt *, undiſtinguiſhed during his life, and dubbed a ſaint by the Janſeniſts after his death. Had the firſt miniſter been a Janſeniſt, the ſaint had been a ſaint ſtill. All France had kept his feſtival: and ſince there are thouſands of eye-witneſſes ready to atteſt the truth of all the miracles ſuppoſed to have been wrought at his tomb, notwithſtanding the diſcouragement which theſe

* The Abbé PARIS.

zealots

zealots have met with from the government; we may aſſure ourſelves, that theſe ſilly impoſtures would have been tranſmitted in all the ſolemn pomp of hiſtory, from the knaves of this age to the fools of the next.

This lying ſpirit has gone forth from eccleſiaſtical to other hiſtorians: and I might fill many pages with inſtances of extravagant fables that have been invented in ſeveral nations, to celebrate their antiquity, to ennoble their originals, and to make them appear illuſtrious in the arts of peace and the triumphs of war. When the brain is well heated, and devotion or vanity, the ſemblance of virtue or real vice, and, above all, diſputes and conteſts, have inſpired that complication of paſſions we term zeal, the effects are much the ſame, and hiſtory becomes very often a lying panegyric or a lying ſatire; for different nations, or different parties in the ſame nation, belie one another without any reſpect for truth, as they murder one another without any regard to right or ſenſe of humanity. Religious zeal may boaſt this horrid advantage over civil zeal, that the effects of it have been more ſanguinary, and the malice more unrelenting. In another reſpect they are more alike, and keep a nearer proportion: different religions have not been quite ſo barbarous to one another as ſects of the ſame religion; and, in like manner, nation has had better quarter from nation, than party from party. But, in all theſe controverſies, men have puſhed their rage beyond their own and their adverſaries lives: they have endeavored to intereſt poſterity in their quarrels, and by rendering hiſtory ſubſervient to this wicked purpoſe, they have done their utmoſt to perpetuate ſcandal, and to immortaliſe their animoſity. The Heathen taxed the Jews even with idolatry; the Jews joined with the Heathen to render chriſtianity odious: but the church, who beat them at their own weapons during theſe conteſts, has

had this further triumph over them, as well as over the ſeveral ſects that have ariſen within her own pale: the works of thoſe who have writ againſt her have been deſtroyed; and whatever ſhe advanced, to juſtify herſelf and to defame her adverſaries, is preſerved in her annals, and the writings of her doctors.

The charge of corrupting hiſtory, in the cauſe of religion, has been always committed to the moſt famous champions, and greateſt ſaints of each church; and, if I was not more afraid of tiring, than of ſcandaliſing your lordſhip, I could quote to you examples of modern churchmen who have endeavored to juſtify foul language by the New teſtament, and cruelty by the Old: nay, what is execrable beyond imagination, and what ſtrikes horror into every mind that entertains due ſentiments of the Supreme Being, God himſelf has been cited for rallying and inſulting Adam after his fall. In other caſes, this charge belongs to the pedants of every nation, and the tools of every party. What accuſations of idolatry and ſuperſtition have not been brought, and aggravated againſt the Mahometans? Thoſe wretched Chriſtians who returned from thoſe wars, ſo improperly called the holy wars, rumored theſe ſtories about the Weſt: and you may find, in ſome of the old chroniclers and romance writers, as well as poets, the Saracens called Paynims; tho ſurely they were much further off from any ſuſpicion of polytheiſm, than thoſe who called them by that name. When Mahomet the ſecond took Conſtantinople in the fifteenth century, the Mahometans began to be a little better, and but a little better known, than they had been before, to theſe parts of the world But their religion, as well as their cuſtoms and manners, was ſtrangely miſrepreſented by the Greek refugees that fled from the Turks: and the terror and hatred which this people had inſpired by

the rapidity of their conqueſts, and by their ferocity, made all theſe miſrepreſentations univerſally paſs for truths. Many ſuch inſtances may be collected from MARACCIO's refutation of the koran, and RELANDUS has publiſhed a very valuable treatiſe on purpoſe to refute theſe calumnies, and to juſtify the Mahometans. Does not this example incline your lordſhip to think, that the Heathens, and the Arians, and other heretics, would not appear quite ſo abſurd in their opinions, nor ſo abominable in their practice, as the orthodox Chriſtians have repreſented them; if ſome RELANDUS could ariſe, with the materials neceſſary to their juſtification in his hands? He who reflects on the circumſtances that attended letters, from the time when CONSTANTINE, inſtead of uniting the characters of emperor and ſovereign pontiff in himſelf when he became Chriſtian, as they were united in him and all the other emperors in the Pagan ſyſtem of government, gave ſo much independent wealth and power to the clergy, and the means of acquiring ſo much more: he who carries theſe reflections on through all the latter empire, and through thoſe ages of ignorance and ſuperſtition, wherein it was hard to ſay which was greateſt, the tyranny of the clergy or the ſervility of the laity: he who conſiders the extreme ſeverity, for inſtance of the laws made by THEODOSIUS in order to ſtifle every writing that the orthodox clergy, that is, the clergy then in faſhion, diſliked; or the character and influence of ſuch a prieſt as GREGORY called the great, who proclaimed war to all heathen learning in order to promote Chriſtian verity; and flattered BRUNEHAULT, and abetted PHOCAS: he who conſiders all theſe things, I ſay, will not be at a loſs to find the reaſons, why hiſtory, both that which was writ before, and a great part of that which has been writ ſince the Chriſtian æra, is come to us ſo imperfect and ſo corrupt.

WHEN

When the imperfection is due to a total want of memorials, either becauſe none were originally written, or becauſe they have been loſt by devaſtations of countries, extirpations of people, and other accidents in a long courſe of time; or becauſe zeal, malice, and policy have joined their endeavors to deſtroy them purpoſely; we muſt be content to remain in our ignorance, and there is no great harm in that. Secure from being deceived, I can ſubmit to be uninformed. But when there is not a total want of memorials, when ſome have been loſt or deſtroyed, and others have been preſerved and propagated, then we are in danger of being deceived: and therefore he muſt be very implicit indeed who receives for true the hiſtory of any religion or nation, and much more that of any ſect or party, without having the means of confronting it with ſome other hiſtory. A reaſonable man will not be thus implicit. He will not eſtabliſh the truth of hiſtory on ſingle, but on concurrent teſtimony. If there be none ſuch, he will doubt abſolutely: if there be a little ſuch, he will proportion his aſſent or diſſent accordingly. A ſmall gleam of light, borrowed from foreign anecdotes, ſerves often to diſcover a whole ſyſtem of falſhood: and even they who corrupt hiſtory frequently betray themſelves by their ignorance or inadvertency. Examples whereof I could eaſily produce. Upon the whole matter, in all theſe caſes we cannot be deceived eſſentially, unleſs we pleaſe; and therefore there is no reaſon to eſtabliſh Pyrrhoniſm, that we may avoid the ridicule of credulity.

In all other caſes, there is leſs reaſon ſtill to do ſo; for when hiſtories and hiſtorical memorials abound, even thoſe that are falſe ſerve to the diſcovery of the truth. Inſpired by different paſſions, and contrived for oppoſite purpoſes, they contradict; and, contradicting, they convict one another. Criticiſm ſeparates the ore from the droſs, and extracts

tracts from various authors a series of true history, which could not have been found entire in any one of them, and will command our assent, when it is formed with judgment, and represented with candor. If this may be done, as it has been done sometimes, with the help of authors who writ on purpose to deceive; how much more easily, and more effectually may it be done, with the help of those who paid a greater regard to truth? In a multitude of writers there will be always some, either incapable of gross prevarication from the fear of being discovered, and of acquiring infamy whilst they seek for fame; or else attached to truth upon a nobler and surer principle. It is certain that these, even the last of them, are fallible. Bribed by some passion or other, the former may venture now and then to propagate a falshood, or to disguise a truth; like the painter that drew in profile, as LUCIAN says, the picture of a prince that had but one eye. MONTAGNE objects to the memorials of DU BELLAY, that tho the gross of the facts be truly related, yet these authors turned every thing they mentioned to the advantage of their master, and mentioned nothing which could not be so turned. The old fellow's words are worth quoting----- "De contourner le juge- "ment des evenemens souvent contre raison à notre avantage, "& d'obmettre tout ce qu'il y a de chatouilleux en la vie "de leur maistre, ils en font mestier." These, and such as these, deviate occasionally and voluntarily from truth; but even they who are attached to it the most religiously may slide sometimes into involuntary error. In matters of history we prefer very justly cotemporary authority; and yet cotemporary authors are the most liable to be warped from the straight rule of truth, in writing on subjects which have affected them strongly, "et quorum pars magna fuerunt." I am so persuaded of this from what I have felt in myself, and observed in others, that if life and health enough fall to my share, and

I am able to finiſh what I meditate, a kind of hiſtory, from the late queen's acceſſion to the throne, to the peace of Utrecht, there will be no materials that I ſhall examine more ſcrupulouſly and ſeverely, than thoſe of the time when the events to be ſpoken of were in tranſaction. But tho the writers of theſe two ſorts, both of whom pay as much regard to truth as the various infirmities of our nature admits, are fallible; yet this fallibility will not be ſufficient to give color to Pyrrhoniſm. Where their ſincerity as to fact is doubtful, we ſtrike out truth by the confrontation of different accounts: as we ſtrike out ſparks of fire by the colliſion of flints and ſteel. Where their judgments are ſuſpicious of partiality, we may judge for ourſelves; or adopt their judgments, after weighing them with certain grains of allowance. A little natural ſagacity will proportion theſe grains according to the particular circumſtances of the authors, or their general characters; for even theſe influence. Thus MONTAGNE pretends, but he exaggerates a little, that GUICCIARDIN no where aſcribes any one action to a virtuous, but every one to a vicious principle. Something like this has been reproached to TACITUS: and, notwithſtanding all the ſprightly looſe obſervations of MONTAGNE in one of his eſſays, where he labors to prove the contrary, read PLUTARCH's compariſons in what language you pleaſe, I am of BODIN's mind, you will perceive they were made by a Greek. In ſhort, my lord, the favorable opportunities of corrupting hiſtory have been often interrupted, and are now over in ſo many countries, that truth penetrates even into thoſe where lying continues ſtill to be part of the policy eccleſiaſtical and civil; or where, to ſay the beſt we can ſay, truth is never ſuffered to appear, till ſhe has paſſed through hands, out of which ſhe ſeldom returns entire and undefiled.

But it is time I ſhould conclude this head, under which I have touched ſome of thoſe reaſons that ſhew the folly of endeavoring to eſtabliſh univerſal Pyrrhoniſm in matters of hiſtory, becauſe there are few hiſtories without ſome lies, and none without ſome miſtakes; and that prove the body of hiſtory which we poſſeſs, ſince antient memorials have been ſo critically examined, and modern memorials have been ſo multiplied, to contain in it ſuch a probable ſeries of events, eaſily diſtinguiſhable from the improbable, as force the aſſent of every man who is in his ſenſes, and are therefore ſufficient to anſwer all the purpoſes of the ſtudy of hiſtory. I might have appealed perhaps, without entering into the argument at all, to any man of candor, whether his doubts concerning the truth of hiſtory have hindered him from applying the examples he has met with in it, and from judging of the preſent, and ſometimes of the future, by the paſt? Whether he has not been touched with reverence and admiration, at the virtue and wiſdom of ſome men, and of ſome ages; and whether he has not felt indignation and contempt for others? Whether Epaminondas or Phocion, for inſtance, the Decii, or the Scipios, have not raiſed in his mind a flame of public ſpirit, and private virtue? and whether he has not ſhuddered with horror at the proſcriptions of Marius and Sylla, at the treachery of Theodotus and Achillas, and at the conſummate cruelty of an infant king? "Quis non contra Marii arma, et contra Syllae proſcriptio-"nem concitatur? Quis non Theodoto, et Achillae, et ipſi "puero, non puerile auſo facinus, infeſtus eſt?" If all this be a digreſſion therefore, your lordſhip will be ſo good as to excuſe it.

II. What has been ſaid concerning the multiplicity of hiſtories, and of hiſtorical memorials, wherewith our libraries abound ſince the reſurrection of letters happened, and the art of printing began, puts me in mind of another general rule,

that ought to be obſerved by every man who intends to make a real improvement, and to become wiſer as well as better, by the ſtudy of hiſtory. I hinted at this rule in a former letter, where I ſaid that we ſhould neither grope in the dark, nor wander in the light. Hiſtory muſt have a certain degree of probability, and authenticity, or the examples we find in it will not carry a force ſufficient to make due impreſſions on our minds, nor to illuſtrate nor to ſtrengthen the precepts of philoſophy and the rules of good policy. But beſides, when hiſtories have this neceſſary authenticity and probability, there is much diſcernment to be employed in the choice and the uſe we make of them. Some are to be red, ſome are to be ſtudied; and ſome may be neglected entirely, not only without detriment, but with advantage. Some are the proper objects of one mans curioſity, ſome of another's, and ſome of all mens; but all hiſtory is not an object of curioſity for any man. He who improperly, wantonly, and abſurdly makes it ſo, indulges a ſort of canine appetite: the curioſity of one, like the hunger of the other, devours ravenouſly and without diſtinction whatever falls in it's way; but neither of them digeſts. They heap crudity upon crudity, and nouriſh and improve nothing but their diſtemper. Some ſuch characters I have known, tho it is not the moſt common extreme into which men are apt to fall. One of them I knew in this country. He joined, to a more than athletic ſtrength of body, a prodigious memory; and to both a prodigious induſtry. He had red almoſt conſtantly twelve or fourteen hours a day, for five and twenty or thirty years; and had heaped together as much learning as could be crowded into a head. In the courſe of my acquaintance with him, I conſulted him once or twice, not oftener; for I found this maſs of learning of as little uſe to me as to the owner. The man was communicative enough; but nothing was diſtinct in his mind. How could it be otherwiſe?

wiſe? he had never ſpared time to think, all was employed in reading. His reaſon had not the merit of common mechaniſm. When you preſs a watch or pull a clock, they anſwer your queſtion with preciſion; for they repeat exactly the hour of the day, and tell you neither more nor leſs than you deſire to know. But when you aſked this man a queſtion, he overwhelmed you by pouring forth all that the ſeveral terms or words of your queſtion recalled to his memory: and if he omitted any thing, it was that very thing to which the ſenſe of the whole queſtion ſhould have led him and confined him. To aſk him a queſtion, was to wind up a ſpring in his memory, that rattled on with vaſt rapidity, and confuſed noiſe, till the force of it was ſpent: and you went away with all the noiſe in your ears, ſtunned and uninformed. I never left him that I was not ready to ſay to him, "Dieu vous faſſe la grace "de devenir moins ſavant!" a wiſh that La Mothe le Vayer mentions upon ſome occaſion or other, and that he would have done well to have applied to himſelf upon many.

He who reads with diſcernment and choice, will acquire leſs learning, but more knowledge: and as this knowledge is collected with deſign, and cultivated with art and method, it will be at all times of immediate and ready uſe to himſelf and others.

Thus uſeful arms in magazines we place,
All rang'd in order; and diſpos'd with grace:
Nor thus alone the curious eye to pleaſe;
But to be found, when need requires, with eaſe.

You remember the verſes, my lord, in our friend's Eſſay on criticiſm, which was the work of his childhood almoſt; but is ſuch a monument of good ſenſe and poetry as no other, that I know, has raiſed in his riper years.

He who reads without this diſcernment and choice, and, like Bodin's pupil, reſolves to read all, will not have time, no nor capacity neither, to do any thing elſe. He will not be able to think, without which it is impertinent to read; nor to act, without which it is impertinent to think. He will aſſemble materials with much pains, and purchaſe them at much expence, and have neither leiſure nor ſkill to frame them into proper ſcantlings, or to prepare them for uſe. To what purpoſe ſhould he huſband his time, or learn architecture? he has no deſign to build. But then to what purpoſe all theſe quarries of ſtone, all theſe mountains of ſand and lime, all theſe foreſts of oak and deal? "Magno impendio temporum, "magna alienarum aurium moleſtia, laudatio haec conſtat, "O hominem literatum! Simus hoc titulo ruſticiore contenti, "O virum bonum!" We may add, and Seneca might have added in his own ſtile, and according to the manners and characters of his own age, another title as ruſtic, and as little in faſhion, "O virum ſapientia ſua ſimplicem, et ſimplicitate ſua "ſapientem! O virum utilem ſibi, ſuis, reipublicae, et humano "generi!" I have ſaid perhaps already, but no matter, it cannot be repeated too often, that the drift of all philoſophy, and of all political ſpeculations, ought to be the making us better men, and better citizens. Thoſe ſtudies, which have no intention towards improving our moral characters, have no pretence to be ſtyled philoſophical. "Quis eſt enim," ſays Tully in his offices, "qui nullis officii praeceptis, traden-"dis, philoſophum ſe audeat dicere?" Whatever political ſpeculations, inſtead of preparing us to be uſeful to ſociety and to promote the happineſs of mankind, are only ſyſtems for gratifying private ambition, and promoting private intereſts at the public expence; all ſuch, I ſay, deſerve to be burnt, and the authors of them to ſtarve, like Machiavel, in a jail.

LETTER

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER V.

I. The great uſe of hiſtory, properly ſo called, as diſtinguiſhed from the writings of mere annaliſts and antiquaries.

II. Greek and Roman hiſtorians.

III. Some idea of a complete hiſtory.

IV. Further cautions to be obſerved in this ſtudy, and the regulation of it according to the different profeſſions, and ſituations of men: above all, the uſe to be made of it (1) by divines, and (2) by thoſe who are called to the ſervice of their country.

I REMEMBER my laſt letter ended abruptly, and a long interval has ſince paſſed: ſo that the thread I had then ſpun has ſlipt from me. I will try to recover it, and to purſue the taſk your lordſhip has obliged me to continue. Beſides the pleaſure of obeying your orders, it is likewiſe of ſome advantage to myſelf, to recollect my thoughts, and reſume a ſtudy in which I was converſant formerly. For nothing can be more true than that ſaying of SOLON reported by PLATO, tho

cenſured by him, impertinently enough in one of his wild books of laws----" Aſſidue addiſcens, ad ſenium venio." The truth is, the moſt knowing man, in the courſe of the longeſt life, will have always much to learn, and the wiſeſt and beſt much to improve. This rule will hold in the knowledge and improvement to be acquired by the ſtudy of hiſtory: and therefore even he who has gone to this ſchool in his youth, ſhould not neglect it in his age. " I read in LIVY," ſays " MONTAGNE, " what another man does not: and PLU-" TARCH red there what I do not." Juſt ſo the ſame man may read at fifty what he did not read in the ſame book at five and twenty: at leaſt I have found it ſo, by my own experience, on many occaſions.

BY comparing, in this ſtudy, the experience of other men and other ages with our own, we improve both: we analyſe, as it were, philoſophy. We reduce all the abſtract ſpeculations of ethics, and all the general rules of human policy, to their firſt principles. With theſe advantages every man may, tho few men do, advance daily towards thoſe ideas, thoſe increated eſſences a Platoniſt would ſay, which no human creature can reach in practice, but in the neareſt approaches to which the perfection of our nature conſiſts; becauſe every approach of this kind renders a man better, and wiſer for himſelf, for his family, for the little community of his own country, and for the great community of the world. Be not ſurpriſed, my lord, at the order in which I place theſe objects. Whatever order divines and moraliſts, who contemplate the duties belonging to theſe objects, may place them in, this is the order they hold in nature: and I have always thought that we might lead ourſelves and others to private virtue, more effectually by a due obſervation of this order, than by any of thoſe ſublime refinements that pervert it.

Self-

Self-love but ſerves the virtuous mind to wake;
As the ſmall pebble ſtirs the peaceful lake.
The centre mov'd, a circle ſtrait ſucceeds;
Another ſtill, and ſtill another ſpreads:
Friend, parent, neighbour, firſt it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.

So ſings our friend POPE, my lord, and ſo I believe. So I ſhall prove too, if I miſtake not, in an epiſtle I am about to write to him, in order to complete a ſet that were writ ſome years ago.

A MAN of my age, who returns to the ſtudy of hiſtory, has no time to loſe, becauſe he has little to live: a man of your lordſhip's age has no time to loſe, becauſe he has much to do. For different reaſons therefore the ſame rules will ſuit us. Neither of us muſt grope in the dark, neither of us muſt wander in the light. I have done the firſt formerly a good deal; "ne verba mihi darentur; ne aliquid eſſe, in hac "recondita antiquitatis ſcientia, magni ac ſecreti boni judica-"remus." If you take my word, you will throw none of your time away in the ſame manner: and I ſhall have the leſs regret for that which I have miſpent, if I perſuade you to haſten down from the broken traditions of antiquity, to the more entire as well as more authentic hiſtories of ages more modern. In the ſtudy of theſe we ſhall find many a complete ſeries of events, preceded by a deduction of their immediate and remote cauſes, related in their full extent, and accompanied with ſuch a detail of circumſtances, and characters, as may tranſport the attentive reader back to the very time, make him a party to the councils, and an actor in the whole ſcene of affairs. Such draughts as theſe, either found in hiſtory or extracted by our own application from it, and ſuch alone, are truly uſeful. Thus hiſtory becomes what ſhe ought to be, and what ſhe has been.

been ſometimes called, " magiſtra vitae," the miſtreſs, like philoſophy, of human life. If ſhe is not this, ſhe is at beſt " nuntia vetuſtatis," the gazette of antiquity, or a dry regiſter of uſeleſs anecdotes. SUETONIUS ſays that TIBERIUS uſed to enquire of the grammarians, " quae mater Hecubae? quod " Achilles nomen inter virgines fuiſſet? quid Syrenes can- " tare ſint ſolitae?" SENECA mentions certain Greek authors, who examined very accurately, whether ANACREON loved wine or women beſt, whether SAPPHO was a common whore, with other points of equal importance: and I make no doubt but that a man, better acquainted than I have the honor to be with the learned perſons of our own country, might find ſome who have diſcovered ſeveral anecdotes concerning the giant ALBION, concerning SAMOTHES the ſon or BRITO the grandſon of JAPHET, and concerning BRUTUS who led a colony into our iſland after the ſiege of Troy, as the others repeopled it after the deluge. But ten millions of ſuch anecdotes as theſe, tho they were true; and complete authentic volumes of Egyptian or Chaldean, of Greek or Latin, of Gallic or Britiſh, of French or Saxon records, would be of no value in my ſenſe, becauſe of no uſe towards our improvement in wiſdom and virtue; if they contained nothing more than dynaſties and genealogies, and a bare mention of remarkable events in the order of time, like journals, chronological tables, or dry and meagre annals.

I SAY the ſame of all thoſe modern compoſitions in which we find rather the heads of hiſtory, than any thing that deſerves to be called hiſtory. Their authors are either abridgers or compilers. The firſt do neither honor to themſelves nor good to mankind; for ſurely the abridger is in a form below the tranſlator; and the book, at leaſt the hiſtory, that wants to be abridged, does not deſerve to be red. They have

have done anciently a great deal of hurt by ſubſtituting many a bad book in the place of a good one; and by giving occaſion to men, who contented themſelves with extracts and abridgments, to neglect and, through their neglect, to loſe the invaluable originals: for which reaſon I curſe CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENETES as heartily as I do GREGORY. The ſecond are of ſome uſe, as far as they contribute to preſerve public acts, and dates, and the memory of great events. But they who are thus employed have ſeldom the means of knowing thoſe private paſſages on which all public tranſactions depend, and as ſeldom the ſkill and the talents neceſſary to put what they do know well together: they cannot ſee the working of the mine, but their induſtry collects the matter that is thrown out. It is the buſineſs, or it ſhould be ſo, of others to ſeparate the pure ore from the droſs, to ſtamp it into coin, and to enrich not encumber mankind. When there are none ſufficient to this taſk, there may be antiquaries, and there may be journaliſts or annaliſts, but there are no hiſtorians.

IT is worth while to obſerve the progreſs that the Romans and the Greeks made towards hiſtory. The Romans had journaliſts or annaliſts from the very beginning of their ſtate. In the ſixth century, or very near it at ſooneſt, they began to have antiquaries, and ſome attempts were made towards writing of hiſtory. I call theſe firſt hiſtorical productions attempts only or eſſays: and they were no more, neither among the Romans nor among the Greeks. "Graeci ipſi ſic initio ſcrip-" titarunt ut noſter CATO, ut PICTOR, ut PISO." It is ANTONY, not the triumvir, my lord, but his grandfather the famous orator, who ſays this in the ſecond book of TULLY De oratore: he adds afterwards, "Itaque qualis apud Graecos " PHERECYDES, HELLANICUS, ACUSILAUS, aliique permulti, " talis noſter CATO, et PICTOR, et PISO." I know that ANTONY

TONY ſpeaks here ſtrictly of defect of ſtyle and want of oratory. They were, " tantummodo narratores, non exorna-" tores," as he expreſſes himſelf: but as they wanted ſtile and ſkill to write in ſuch a manner as might anſwer all the ends of hiſtory, ſo they wanted materials. PHERECYDES writ ſomething about IPHIGENIA, and the feſtivals of BACCHUS. HELLANICUS, was a poetical hiſtorian, and ACUSILAUS graved genealogies on plates of braſs. PICTOR, who is called by LIVY " ſcriptorum antiquiſſimus," publiſhed, I think, ſome ſhort annals of his own time. Neither he nor PISO could have ſufficient materials for the hiſtory of Rome; nor CATO, I preſume, even for the antiquities of Italy. The Romans, with the other people of that country, were then juſt riſing out of barbarity, and growing acquainted with letters; for thoſe that the Grecian colonies might bring into Sicily, and the ſouthern parts of Italy, ſpred little, or laſted little, and made in the whole no figure. And whatever learning might have floriſhed among the ancient Etrurians, which was perhaps at moſt nothing better than augury, and divination, and ſuperſtitious rites, which were admired and cultivated in ignorant ages, even that was almoſt entirely worn out of memory. Pedants, who would impoſe all the traditions of the four firſt ages of Rome, for authentic hiſtory, have inſiſted much on certain annals, of which mention is made in the very place I have juſt now quoted. " Ab initio rerum Romanarum" ſays the ſame interlocutor, " uſque ad P. MUCIUM pontificem maximum, res " omnes ſingulorum annorum mandabat literis pontifex maxi-" mus, efferebatque in album, et proponebat tabulam domi, " poteſtas ut eſſet populo cognoſcendi; iidemque etiam nunc " annales maximi nominantur." But, my lord, be pleaſed to take notice, that the very diſtinction I make is made here between a bare annaliſt and an hiſtorian: " erat hiſtoria nihil " aliud," in theſe early days, " niſi annalium confectio." Take notice

notice likewiſe, by the way, that LIVY, whoſe particular application it had been to ſearch into this matter, affirms poſitively that the greateſt part of all public and private monuments, among which he ſpecifies theſe very annals, had been deſtroyed in the ſack of Rome by the Gauls: and PLUTARCH cites CLODIUS for the ſame aſſertion, in the life of NUMA POMPILIUS. Take notice, in the laſt place, of that which is more immediately to our preſent purpoſe. Theſe annals could contain nothing more than ſhort minutes or memorandums hung up in a table at the pontiff's houſe, like the rules of the game in a billiard-room, and much ſuch hiſtory as we have in the epitomies prefixed to the books of LIVY or of any other hiſtorian, in lapidary inſcriptions, or in ſome modern almanacs. Materials for hiſtory they were no doubt, but ſcanty and inſufficient; ſuch as thoſe ages could produce when writing and reading were accompliſhments ſo uncommon, that the praetor was directed by law, "clavum pangere," to drive a nail into the door of a temple, that the number of years might be reckoned by the number of nails. Such in ſhort as we have in monkiſh annaliſts, and other ancient chroniclers of nations now in being: but not ſuch as can entitle the authors of them to be called hiſtorians, nor can enable others to write hiſtory in that fulneſs in which it muſt be written to become a leſſon of ethics and politics. The truth is, nations, like men, have their infancy: and the few paſſages of that time, which they retain, are not ſuch as deſerved moſt to be remembered; but ſuch as, being moſt proportioned to that age, made the ſtrongeſt impreſſions on their minds. In thoſe nations that preſerve their dominion long, and grow up to manhood, the elegant as well as the neceſſary arts and ſciences are improved to ſome degree of perfection; and hiſtory, that was at firſt intended only to record the names, or perhaps the general characters of ſome famous men, and to tranſmit in groſs the remarkable events

of every age to poſterity, is raiſed to anſwer another, and a nobler end.

II. Thus it happened among the Greeks, but much more among the Romans, notwithſtanding the prejudices in favor of the former, even among the latter. I have ſometimes thought that Virgil might have juſtly aſcribed to his countrymen the praiſe of writing hiſtory better, as well as that of affording the nobleſt ſubjects for it, in thoſe famous verſes, * where the different excellencies of the two nations are ſo finely touched: but he would have weakened perhaps by lengthening, and have flattened the climax. Open Herodotus, you are entertained by an agreeable ſtory-teller, who meant to entertain, and nothing more. Read Thucydides or Xenophon, you are taught indeed as well as entertained: and the ſtateſman or the general, the philoſopher or the orator, ſpeaks to you in every page. They wrote on ſubjects on which they were well informed, and they treated them fully: they maintained the dignity of hiſtory, and thought it beneath them to vamp up old traditions, like the writers of their age and country, and to be the trumpeters of a lying antiquity. The Cyropaedia of Xenophon may be objected perhaps; but if he gave it for a romance, not an hiſtory, as he might for aught we can tell, it is out of the caſe: and if he gave it for an hiſtory, not a romance, I ſhould prefer his authority to that of Herodotus or any other of his countrymen. But however this might be, and whatever merit we may juſtly aſcribe to

* Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius aera,
Credo equidem: vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
Orabunt cauſas melius: coelique meatus
Deſcribent radio, et ſurgentia ſidera dicent:
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hae tibi erunt artes; paciſque imponere morem,
Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos.

theſe

theſe two writers, who were almoſt ſingle in their kind, and who treated but ſmall portions of hiſtory; certain it is in general, that the levity as well as loquacity of the Greeks made them incapable of keeping up to the true ſtandard of hiſtory: and even POLYBIUS and DIONYSIUS of Halicarnaſſus muſt bow to the great Roman authors. Many principal men of that commonwealth wrote memorials of their own actions and their own times: SYLLA, CAESAR, LABIENUS, POLLIO, AUGUSTUS, and others. What writers of memorials, what compilers of the materia hiſtorica were theſe? What genius was neceſſary to finiſh up the pictures that ſuch maſters had ſketched? Rome afforded men that were equal to the taſk. Let the remains, the precious remains, of SALLUST, of LIVY, and of TACITUS, witneſs this truth. When TACITUS wrote, even the appearances of virtue had been long proſcribed, and taſte was grown corrupt as well as manners. Yet hiſtory preſerved her integrity and her luſtre. She preſerved them in the writings of ſome whom TACITUS mentions, in none perhaps more than his own; every line of which out-weighs whole pages of ſuch a rhetor as FAMIANUS STRADA. I ſingle him out among the moderns, becauſe he had the fooliſh preſumption to cenſure TACITUS, and to write hiſtory himſelf: and your lordſhip will forgive this ſhort excurſion in honor of a favorite author.

WHAT a ſchool of private and public virtue had been opened to us at the reſurrection of learning, if the latter hiſtorians of the Roman commonwealth, and the firſt of the ſucceeding monarchy, had come down to us entire? The few that are come down, tho broken and imperfect, compoſe the beſt body of hiſtory that we have, nay the only body of ancient hiſtory that deſerves to be an object of ſtudy. It fails us indeed moſt at that remarkable and fatal period, where our reaſonable curioſity is raiſed the higheſt. LIVY employed five and forty

books

books to bring his hiſtory down to the end of the ſixth century, and the breaking out of the third Punic war: but he employed ninety five to bring it down from the thence to the death of DRUSUS; that is, through the courſe of one hundred and twenty or thirty years. APIAN, DION CASSIUS, and others, nay even PLUTARCH included, make us but poor amends for what is loſt of LIVY. Among all the adventitious helps by which we endeavor to ſupply this loſs in ſome degree, the beſt are thoſe which we find ſcattered up and down in the works of TULLY. His Orations, particularly, and his Letters, contain many curious anecdotes and inſtructive reflections, concerning the intrigues and machinations that were carried on againſt liberty, from CATILINE's conſpiracy to CAESAR's. The ſtate of the government, the conſtitution and temper of the ſeveral parties, and the characters of the principal perſons who figured at that time on the public ſtage, are to be ſeen there in a ſtronger and truer light than they would have appeared perhaps if he had writ purpoſely on this ſubject, and even in thoſe memorials which he ſomewhere promiſes ATTICUS to write. "Excudam aliquod Heraclidium opus, quod "lateat in theſauris tuis." He would hardly have unmaſked in ſuch a work, as freely as in familiar occaſional letters, POMPEY, CATO, BRUTUS, nay himſelf; the four men of Rome, on whoſe praiſes he dwelt with the greateſt complacency. The age in which LIVY floriſhed abounded with ſuch materials as theſe: they were freſh, they were authentic; it was eaſy to procure them, it was ſafe to employ them. How he did employ them in executing the ſecond part of his deſign, we may judge by his execution of the firſt: and, I own to your lordſhip, I ſhould be glad to exchange, if it were poſſible, what we have of this hiſtory for what we have not. Would you not be glad, my lord, to ſee, in one ſtupendous draught, the whole progreſs of that government from liberty

to ſervitude? the whole ſeries of cauſes and effects, apparent and real, public and private? thoſe which all men ſaw and all good men lamented and oppoſed at the time; and thoſe which were ſo diſguiſed to the prejudices, to the partialities of a divided people, and even to the corruption of mankind, that many did not, and that many could pretend they did not, diſcern them, till it was too late to reſiſt them? I am ſorry to ſay it, this part of the Roman ſtory would be not only more curious and more authentic than the former, but of more immediate and more important application to the preſent ſtate of Britain. But it is loſt: the loſs is irreparable, and your lordſhip will not blame me for deploring it.

III. They who ſet up for ſcepticiſm may not regret the loſs of ſuch an hiſtory: but this I will be bold to aſſert to them, that an hiſtory muſt be writ on this plan and muſt aim at leaſt at theſe perfections, or it will anſwer ſufficiently none of the intentions of hiſtory. That it will not anſwer ſufficiently the intention I have inſiſted upon in theſe letters, that of inſtructing poſterity by the example of former ages, is manifeſt: and I think it is as manifeſt, that an hiſtory cannot be ſaid even to relate faithfully, and inform us truly, that does not relate fully, and inform us of all that is neceſſary to make a true judgment concerning the matters contained in it. Naked facts, without the cauſes that produced them and the circumſtances that accompanied them, are not ſufficient to characteriſe actions or counſels. The nice degrees of wiſdom and of folly, of virtue and of vice, will not only be undiſcoverable in them; but we muſt be very often unable to determine under which of theſe characters they fall in general. The ſceptics I am ſpeaking of are therefore guilty of this abſurdity: the nearer an hiſtory comes to the true idea of hiſtory, the better it informs and the more it in-

ſtructs us, the more worthy to be rejected it appears to them. I have ſaid and allowed enough to content any reaſonable man about the uncertainty of hiſtory. I have owned that the beſt are defective, and I will add in this place an obſervation which did not, I think, occur to me before. Conjecture is not always diſtinguiſhed perhaps as it ought to be; ſo that an ingenious writer may ſometimes do very innocently, what a malicious writer does very criminally as often as he dares, and as his malice requires it: he may account for events after they have happened, by a ſyſtem of cauſes and conduct that did not really produce them, tho it might poſſibly or even probably have produced them. But this obſervation, like ſeveral others, becomes a reaſon for examining and comparing authorities, and for preferring ſome, not for rejecting all. DAVILA, a noble hiſtorian ſurely, and one whom I ſhould not ſcruple to confeſs equal in many reſpects to LIVY, as I ſhould not ſcruple to prefer his countryman GUICCIARDIN to THUCYDIDES in every reſpect; DAVILA, my lord, was accuſed, from the firſt publication of his hiſtory, or at leaſt was ſuſpected, of too much refinement and ſubtlety, in developing the ſecret motives of actions, in laying the cauſes of events too deep, and deducing them often through a ſeries of progreſſion too complicated, and too artifully wrought. But yet the ſuſpicious perſon who ſhould reject this hiſtorian upon ſuch general inducements as theſe, would have no grace to oppoſe his ſuſpicions to the authority of the firſt duke of EPERNON, who had been an actor, and a principal actor too, in many of the ſcenes that DAVILA recites. GIRARD, ſecretary to this duke, and no contemptible biographer, relates, that this hiſtory came down to the place where the old man reſided in Gaſcony, a little before his death; that he red it to him, that the duke confirmed the truth of the narrations in it, and ſeemed only ſurpriſed by what means the author could be ſo well informed

informed of the moſt ſecret councils and meaſures of thoſe times.

IV. I HAVE ſaid enough on this head, and your lordſhip may be induced perhaps, by what I have ſaid, to think with me, that ſuch hiſtories as theſe, whether ancient or modern, deſerve alone to be ſtudied. Let us leave the credulous learned to write hiſtory without materials, or to ſtudy thoſe who do ſo; to wrangle about ancient traditions, and to ring different changes on the ſame ſet of bells. Let us leave the ſceptics, in modern as well as ancient hiſtory, to triumph in the notable diſcovery of the ides of one month miſtaken for the calends of another, or in the various dates and contradictory circumſtances which they find in weekly gazettes and monthly mercuries. Whilſt they are thus employed, your lordſhip and I will proceed, if you pleaſe, to conſider more cloſely, than we have yet done, the rule mentioned above; that I mean of uſing diſcernment and choice in the ſtudy of the moſt authentic hiſtory, that of not wandering in the light, which is as neceſſary as that of not groping in the dark.

MAN is the ſubject of every hiſtory; and to know him well, we muſt ſee him and conſider him, as hiſtory alone can preſent him to us, in every age, in every country, in every ſtate, in life and in death. Hiſtory therefore of all kinds, of civilized and uncivilized, of ancient and modern nations, in ſhort all hiſtory, that deſcends to a ſufficient detail of human actions and characters, is uſeful to bring us acquainted with our ſpecies, nay with ourſelves. To teach and to inculcate the general principles of virtue, and the general rules of wiſdom and good policy, which reſult from ſuch details of actions and characters, comes for the moſt part, and always ſhould come, expreſly and directly into the deſign of

thoſe who are capable of giving ſuch details: and therefore whilſt they narrate as hiſtorians, they hint often as philoſophers; they put into our hands, as it were, on every proper occaſion, the end of a clue, that ſerves to remind us of ſearching, and to guide us in the ſearch of that truth which the example before us either eſtabliſhes or illuſtrates. If a writer neglects this part, we are able however to ſupply his neglect by our own attention and induſtry: and when he gives us a good hiſtory of Peruvians or Mexicans, of Chineſe or Tartars, of Muſcovites or Negroes, we may blame him, but we muſt blame ourſelves much more, if we do not make it a good leſſon of philoſophy. This being the general uſe of hiſtory, it is not to be neglected. Every one may make it, who is able to read and to reflect on what he reads: and every one who makes it will find, in his degree, the benefit that ariſes from an early acquaintance contracted in this manner with mankind. We are not only paſſengers or ſojourners in this world, but we are abſolute ſtrangers at the firſt ſteps we make in it. Our guides are often ignorant, often unfaithful. By this map of the country, which hiſtory ſpreads before us, we may learn, if we pleaſe, to guide ourſelves. In our journey through it, we are beſet on every ſide. We are beſieged ſometimes even in our ſtrongeſt holds. Terrors and temptations, conducted by the paſſions of other men, aſſault us: and our own paſſions, that correſpond with theſe, betray us. Hiſtory is a collection of the journals of thoſe who have travelled through the ſame country, and been expoſed to the ſame accidents: and their good and their ill ſucceſs are equally inſtructive. In this purſuit of knowledge an immenſe field is opened to us: general hiſtories, ſacred and profane; the hiſtories of particular countries, particular events, particular orders, particular men; memorials, anecdotes, travels. But we muſt not ramble in this field

field without diſcernment or choice, nor even with theſe muſt we ramble too long.

As to the choice of authors, who have writ on all theſe various ſubjects, ſo much has been ſaid by learned men concerning all thoſe that deſerve attention, and their ſeveral characters are ſo well eſtabliſhed, that it would be a ſort of pedantic affectation to lead your lordſhip through ſo voluminous, and at the ſame time ſo eaſy, a detail. I paſs it over therefore in order to obſerve, that as ſoon as we have taken this general view of mankind, and of the courſe of human affairs in different ages and different parts of the world, we ought to apply, and, the ſhortneſs of human life conſidered, to confine ourſelves almoſt entirely in our ſtudy of hiſtory, to ſuch hiſtories as have an immediate relation to our profeſſions, or to our rank and ſituation in the ſociety to which we belong. Let me inſtance in the profeſſion of divinity, as the nobleſt and the moſt important.

(1) I HAVE ſaid ſo much concerning the ſhare which divines of all religions have taken in the corruption of hiſtory, that I ſhould have anathemas pronounced againſt me, no doubt, in the eaſt and the weſt, by the dairo, the mufti, and the pope, if theſe letters were ſubmitted to eccleſiaſtical cenſure; for ſurely, my lord, the clergy have a better title, than the ſons of Apollo, to be called "genus irritabile vatum." What would it be, if I went about to ſhew, how many of the chriſtian clergy abuſe, by miſrepreſentation and falſe quotation, the hiſtory they can no longer corrupt? And yet this taſk would not be, even to me, an hard one. But as I mean to ſpeak in this place of chriſtian divines alone, ſo I mean to ſpeak of ſuch of them particularly as may be called divines without any ſneer; of ſuch of them, for ſome ſuch I think there are, as be-

lieve themſelves, and would have mankind believe; not for temporal but ſpiritual intereſt, not for the ſake of the clergy, but for the ſake of mankind. Now it has been long matter of aſtoniſhment to me, how ſuch perſons as theſe could take ſo much ſilly pains to eſtabliſh myſtery on metaphyſics, revelation on philoſophy, and matters of fact on abſtract reaſoning? A religion founded on the authority of a divine miſſion, confirmed by prophecies and miracles, appeals to facts: and the facts muſt be proved as all other facts that paſs for authentic are proved; for faith ſo reaſonable after this proof, is abſurd before it. If they are thus proved, the religion will prevail without the aſſiſtance of ſo much profound reaſoning: if they are not thus proved, the authority of it will ſink in the world even with this aſſiſtance. The divines object in their diſputes with atheiſts, and they object very juſtly, that theſe men require improper proofs; proofs that are not ſuited to the nature of the ſubject, and then cavil that ſuch proofs are not furniſhed. But what then do they mean, to fall into the ſame abſurdity themſelves in their diſputes with theiſts, and to din improper proofs in ears that are open to proper proofs? The matter is of great moment, my lord, and I make no excuſe for the zeal which obliges me to dwell a little on it. A ſerious and honeſt application to the ſtudy of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, and every part of profane hiſtory and chronology relative to it, is incumbent on ſuch reverend perſons as are here ſpoken of, on a double account: becauſe hiſtory alone can furniſh the proper proofs, that the religion they teach is of God; and becauſe the unfair manner, in which theſe proofs have been and are daily furniſhed, creates prejudices, and gives advantages againſt chriſtianity that require to be removed. No ſcholar will dare to deny, that falſe hiſtory, as well as ſham miracles, has been employed to propagate chriſtianity formerly: and whoever examines the writers of our own age, will find the ſame

ſame abuſe of hiſtory continued. Many and many inſtances of this abuſe might be produced. It is grown into cuſtom, writers copy one another, and the miſtake that was commited, or the falſhood that was invented by one, is adopted by hundreds.

ABBADIE ſays in his famous book, that the goſpel of St. MATTHEW is cited by CLEMENS biſhop of Rome, a diſciple of the apoſtles; that BARNABAS cites it in his epiſtle; that IGNATIUS and POLYCARPE receive it; and that the ſame fathers, that give teſtimony for MATTHEW, give it likewiſe for MARK. Nay your lordſhip will find, I believe, that the preſent biſhop of London, in his third paſtoral letter, ſpeaks to the ſame effect. I will not trouble you nor myſelf with any more inſtances of the ſame kind. Let this, which occurred to me as I was writing, ſuffice. It may well ſuffice; for I preſume the fact advanced by the miniſter and the biſhop is a miſtake. If the fathers of the firſt century do mention ſome paſſages that are agreeable to what we read in our evangeliſts, will it follow that theſe fathers had the ſame goſpels before them? To ſay ſo is a manifeſt abuſe of hiſtory, and quite inexcuſable in writers that knew, or ſhould have known, that theſe fathers made uſe of other goſpels, wherein ſuch paſſages might be contained, or they might be preſerved in unwritten tradition. Beſides which I could almoſt venture to affirm that theſe fathers of the firſt century do not expreſly name the goſpels we have of MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, and JOHN. To the two reaſons that have been given why thoſe who make divinity their profeſſion ſhould ſtudy hiſtory, particularly eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, with an honeſt and ſerious application; in order to ſupport chriſtianity againſt the attacks of unbelievers, and to remove the doubts and prejudices that the unfair proceedings of men of their own order have raiſed in minds candid

but

but not implicit, willing to be informed but curious to examine; to theſe, I ſay, we may add another conſideration that ſeems to me of no ſmall importance. Writers of the Roman religion have attempted to ſhew, that the text of the holy writ is on many accounts inſufficient to be the ſole criterion of orthodoxy: I apprehend too that they have ſhewn it. Sure I am that experience, from the firſt promulgation of chriſtianity to this hour, ſhews abundantly with how much eaſe and ſucceſs the moſt oppoſite, the moſt extravagant, nay the moſt impious opinions, and the moſt contradictory faiths, may be founded on the ſame text; and plauſibly defended by the ſame authority. Writers of the reformed religion have erected their batteries againſt tradition; and the only difficulty they had to encounter in this enterpriſe lay in levelling and pointing their cannon ſo as to avoid demoliſhing, in one common ruin, the traditions they retain, and thoſe they reject. Each ſide has been employed to weaken the cauſe and explode the ſyſtem of his adverſary: and, whilſt they have been ſo employed, they have jointly laid their axes to the root of chriſtianity: for thus men will be apt to reaſon upon what they have advanced. "If the text has not that authenticity, clearneſs, and preci-
"ſion which are neceſſary to eſtabliſh it as a divine and a
"certain rule of faith and practice; and if the tradition of
"the church, from the firſt ages of it till the days of LUTHER
"and CALVIN, has been corrupted itſelf, and has ſerved to
"corrupt the faith and practice of chriſtians; there remains
"at this time no ſtandard at all of chriſtianity. By conſe-
"quence either this religion was not originally of divine in-
"ſtitution, or elſe God has not provided effectually for pre-
"ſerving the genuine purity of it, and the gates of hell have
"actually prevailed, in contradiction to his promiſe, againſt
"the church." The beſt effect of this reaſoning that can be hoped for, is, that men ſhould fall into theiſm, and ſubſcribe

to the firſt propoſition: he muſt be worſe than an atheiſt who can affirm the laſt. The dilemma is terrible, my lord. Party zeal and private intereſt have formed it: the common intereſt of chriſtianity is deeply concerned to ſolve it. Now, I preſume, it can never be ſolved without a more accurate examination, not only of the chriſtian but of the jewiſh ſyſtem, than learned men have been hitherto impartial enough and ſagacious enough to take, or honeſt enough to communicate. Whilſt the authenticity and ſenſe of the text of the bible remain as diſputable, and whilſt the tradition of the church remains as problematical, to ſay no worſe, as the immenſe labors of the chriſtian divines in ſeveral communions have made them appear to be; chriſtianity may lean on the civil and eccleſiaſtical power, and be ſupported by the forcible influence of education: but the proper force of religion, that force which ſubdues the mind and awes the conſcience by conviction, will be wanting.

I HAD reaſon therefore to produce divinity, as one inſtance of thoſe profeſſions that require a particular application to the ſtudy of ſome particular parts of hiſtory; and ſince I have ſaid ſo much on the ſubject in my zeal for chriſtianity, I will add this further. The reſurrection of letters was a fatal period: the chriſtian ſyſtem has been attacked, and wounded too, very ſeverely ſince that time. The defence has been better made indeed by modern divines, than it had been by antient fathers and apologiſts. The moderns have invented new methods of defence, and have abandoned ſome poſts that were not tenable: but ſtill there are others, in defending which they lie under great diſadvantages. Such are various facts, piouſly believed in former times, but on which the truth of chriſtianity has been reſted very imprudently in more enlightned ages; becauſe the falſity of ſome, and the groſs improbability of others

others are ſo evident, that, inſtead of anſwering the purpoſe for which they were invented, they have rendered the whole tenor of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory and tradition precarious, ever ſince a ſtrict but juſt application of the rules of criticiſm has been made to them. I touch theſe things lightly; but if your lordſhip reflects upon them, you will find reaſon perhaps to think as I do, that it is high time the clergy in all chriſtian communions ſhould join their forces, and eſtabliſh thoſe hiſtorical facts, which are the foundations of the whole ſyſtem, on clear and unqueſtionable hiſtorical authority, ſuch as they require in all caſes of moment from others; reject candidly what cannot be thus eſtabliſhed; and purſue their enquiries in the ſame ſpirit of truth through all the ages of the church; without any regard to hiſtorians, fathers, or councils, more than they are ſtrictly entitled to on the face of what they have tranſmitted to us, on their own conſiſtency, and on the concurrence of other authority. Our paſtors would be thus, I preſume, much better employed than they generally are. Thoſe of the clergy who make religion merely a trade, who regard nothing more than the ſubſiſtence it affords them, or in higher life the wealth and power they enjoy by the means of it, may ſay to themſelves, that it will laſt their time, or that policy and reaſon of ſtate will preſerve the form of a church when the ſpirit of religion is extinct. But thoſe whom I mentioned above, thoſe who act for ſpiritual not temporal ends, and are deſirous that men ſhould believe and practiſe the doctrines of chriſtianity, as well as go to church and pay tithes, will feel and own the weight of ſuch conſiderations as theſe; and agree, that however the people have been, and may be ſtill amuſed, yet chriſtianity has been in decay ever ſince the reſurrection of letters; and that it cannot be ſupported as it was ſupported before that aera, nor by any other way than that which I propoſe, and which a due application to the ſtudy

of

of hiſtory, chronology, and criticiſm, would enable our divines to purſue, no doubt, with ſucceſs.

I MIGHT inſtance, in other profeſſions, the obligations men lie under of applying themſelves to certain parts of hiſtory, and I can hardly forbear doing it in that of the law; in it's nature the nobleſt and moſt beneficial to mankind, in it's abuſe and debaſement the moſt ſordid and the moſt pernicious. A lawyer now is nothing more, I ſpeak of ninety-nine in an hundred at leaſt, to uſe ſome of TULLY's words, "niſi legu-"leius quidam cautus, et acutus praeco actionum, cantor for-"mularum, auceps ſyllabarum." But there have been lawyers that were orators, philoſophers, hiſtorians: there have been BACONS and CLARENDONS, my lord. There will be none ſuch any more, till in ſome better age, true ambition or the love of fame prevails over avarice; and till men find leiſure and encouragement to prepare themſelves for the exerciſe of this profeſſion, by climbing up to the "vantage ground," ſo my lord BACON calls it, of ſcience; inſtead of groveling all their lives below, in a mean but gainful application to all the little arts of chicane. Till this happen, the profeſſion of the law will ſcarce deſerve to be ranked among the learned profeſſions: and whenever it happens, one of the vantage grounds, to which men muſt climb, is metaphyſical, and the other, hiſtorical knowledge. They muſt pry into the ſecret receſſes of the human heart, and become well acquainted with the whole moral world, that they may diſcover the abſtract reaſon of all laws: and they muſt trace the laws of particular ſtates, eſpecially of their own, from the firſt rough ſketches to the more perfect draughts; from the firſt cauſes or occaſions that produced them, through all the effects, good and bad, that they produced. But I am running inſenſibly into a ſubject, which would detain me too long from one that relates more

immediately to your lordſhip, and with which I intend to conclude this long letter.

(2) I PASS from the conſideration of thoſe profeſſions to which particular parts or kinds of hiſtory ſeem to belong: and I come to ſpeak of the ſtudy of hiſtory, as a neceſſary mean to prepare men for the diſcharge of that duty which they owe to their country, and which is common to all the members of every ſociety that is conſtituted according to the rules of right reaſon, and with a due regard to the common good. I have met, in ST. REAL's works, or ſome other French book, with a ridicule caſt on private men who make hiſtory a political ſtudy, or who apply themſelves in any manner to affairs of ſtate. But the reflection is too general. In governments ſo arbitrary by their conſtitution, that the will of the prince is not only the ſupreme but the ſole law, it is ſo far from being a duty that it may be dangerous, and muſt be impertinent in men, who are not called by the prince to the adminiſtration of public affairs, to concern themſelves about it, or to fit themſelves for it. The ſole vocation there is the favor of the court; and whatever deſignation God makes by the talents he beſtows, tho it may ſerve, which it ſeldom ever does, to direct the choice of the prince, yet I preſume that it cannot become a reaſon to particular men, or create a duty on them, to devote themſelves to the public ſervice. Look on the Turkiſh government. See a fellow taken, from rowing in a common paſſage-boat, by the caprice of the prince: ſee him inveſted next day with all the power the ſoldans took under the caliphs, or the mayors of the palace under the ſucceſſors of CLOVIS: ſee a whole empire governed by the ignorance, inexperience, and arbitrary will of this tyrant, and a few other ſubordinate tyrants, as ignorant and unexperienced as himſelf. In France indeed, tho an abſolute government, things go a

little better. Arts and ſciences are encouraged, and here and there an example may be found of a man who has riſen by ſome extraordinary talents, amidſt innumerable examples of men who have arrived at the greateſt honors and higheſt poſts by no other merit than that of aſſiduous fawning, attendance, or of ſkill in ſome deſpicable puerile amuſement; in training waſps, for inſtance, to take regular flights like hawks, and ſtoop at flies. The nobility of France, like the children of tribute among the ancient Saracens and modern Turks, are ſet apart for wars. They are bred to make love, to hunt, and to fight: and, if any of them ſhould acquire knowledge ſuperior to this, they would acquire that which might be prejudicial to themſelves, but could not become beneficial to their country. The affairs of ſtate are truſted to other hands. Some have riſen to them by drudging long in buſineſs: ſome have been made miniſters almoſt in the cradle: and the whole power of the government has been abandoned to others in the dotage of life. There is a monarchy, an abſolute monarchy too, I mean that of China, wherein the adminiſtration of the government is carried on, under the direction of the prince, ever ſince the dominion of the Tartars has been eſtabliſhed, by ſeveral claſſes of Mandarins, and according to the deliberation and advice of ſeveral orders of councils: the admiſſion to which claſſes and orders depends on the abilities of the candidates, as their riſe on them depends on the behaviour they hold, and the improvements they make afterwards. Under ſuch a government, it is neither impertinent nor ridiculous, in any of the ſubjects who are invited by their circumſtances, or puſhed to it by their talents, to make the hiſtory of their own and of other countries a political ſtudy, and to fit themſelves by this and all other ways for the ſervice of the public. It is not dangerous neither; or an honor, that outweighs the danger, attends it: ſince private men have a right by the an-

tient conſtitution of this government, as well as councils of ſtate, to repreſent to the prince the abuſes of his adminiſtration. But ſtill men have not there the ſame occaſion to concern themſelves in the affairs of the ſtate, as the nature of a free government gives to the members of it. In our own country, for in our own the forms of a free government at leaſt are hitherto preſerved, men are not only deſigned for the public ſervice by the circumſtances of their ſituation, and their talents, all which may happen in others: but they are deſigned to it by their birth in many caſes, and in all caſes they may dedicate themſelves to this ſervice, and take, in different degrees, ſome ſhare in it, whether they are called to it by the prince or no. In abſolute governments, all public ſervice is to the prince, and he nominates all thoſe that ſerve the public. In free governments, there is a diſtinct and a principal ſervice due to the ſtate. Even the king, of ſuch a limited monarchy as ours, is but the firſt ſervant of the people. Among his ſubjects, ſome are appointed by the conſtitution, and others are elected by the people, to carry on the exerciſe of the legiſlative power jointly with him, and to controul the executive power independently on him. Thus your lordſhip is born a member of that order of men, in whom a third part of the ſupreme power of the government reſides: and your right to the exerciſe of the power belonging to this order not being yet opened, you are choſen into another body of men, who have different power and a different conſtitution, but who poſſeſs another third part of the ſupreme legiſlative authority, for as long a time as the commiſſion or truſt delegated to them by the people laſts. Freemen, who are neither born to the firſt, nor elected to the laſt, have a right however to complain, to repreſent, to petition, and, I add, even to do more in caſes of the utmoſt extremity. For ſure there cannot be a greater abſurdity, than to affirm, that the people have a remedy in reſiſtance, when their

their prince attempts to enſlave them; but that they have none, when their repreſentatives ſell themſelves and them.

The ſum of what I have been ſaying is, that, in free governments, the public ſervice is not confined to thoſe whom the prince appoints to different poſts in the adminiſtration under him; that there the care of the ſtate is the care of multitudes; that many are called to it in a particular manner by their rank, and by other circumſtances of their ſituation; and that even thoſe whom the prince appoints are not only anſwerable to him, but, like him, and before him, to the nation, for their behavior in their ſeveral poſts. It can never be impertinent nor ridiculous therefore in ſuch a country, whatever it might be in the abbot of St. Real's, which was Savoy I think; or in Peru, under the Incas, where, Garcilasso de la Vega ſays, it was lawful for none but the nobility to ſtudy ----for men of all degrees to inſtruct themſelves in thoſe affairs wherein they may be actors, or judges of thoſe that act, or controlers of thoſe that judge. On the contrary, it is incumbent on every man to inſtruct himſelf, as well as the means and opportunities he has permit, concerning the nature and intereſts of the government, and thoſe rights and duties that belong to him, or to his ſuperiors, or to his inferiors. This in general; but in particular it is certain that the obligations under which we lie to ſerve our country increaſe, in proportion to the ranks we hold, and the other circumſtances of birth, fortune, and ſituation that call us to this ſervice; and, above all, to the talents which God has given us to perform it.

It is in this view, that I ſhall addreſs to your lordſhip whatever I have further to ſay on the ſtudy of hiſtory.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER VI.

From what period modern hiſtory is peculiarly uſeful to the ſervice of our country, viz.

From the end of the fifteenth century to the preſent.

The diviſion of this into three particular periods:

In order to a ſketch of the hiſtory and ſtate of Europe from that time.

SINCE then you are, my lord, by your birth, by the nature of our government, and by the talents God has given you, attached for life to the ſervice of your country; ſince genius alone cannot enable you to go through this ſervice with honor to yourſelf and advantage to your country, whether you ſupport or whether you oppoſe the adminiſtrations that ariſe; ſince a great ſtock of knowledge, acquired betimes and continually improved, is neceſſary to this end; and ſince one part of this ſtock muſt be collected from the ſtudy of hiſtory, as the other part is to be gained by obſervation and experience;

I come now to ſpeak to your lordſhip of ſuch hiſtory as has an immediate relation to the great duty and buſineſs of your life, and of the method to be obſerved in this ſtudy. The notes I have by me, which were of ſome little uſe thus far, ſerve me no farther, and I have no books to conſult. No matter; I ſhall be able to explain my thoughts without their aſſiſtance, and leſs liable to be tedious. I hope to be as full and as exact on memory alone, as the manner in which I ſhall treat the ſubject requires me to be.

I SAY then, that however cloſely affairs are linked together in the progreſſion of governments, and how much ſoever events that follow are dependent on thoſe that precede, the whole connexion diminiſhes to ſight as the chain lengthens; till at laſt it ſeems to be broken, and the links that are continued from that point bear no proportion nor any ſimilitude to the former. I would not be underſtood to ſpeak only of thoſe great changes, that are wrought by a concurrence of extraordinary events; for inſtance the expulſion of one nation, the deſtruction of one government, and the eſtabliſhment of another: but even of thoſe that are wrought in the ſame governments and among the ſame people, ſlowly and almoſt imperceptibly, by the neceſſary effects of time, and flux condition of human affairs. When ſuch changes as theſe happen in ſeveral ſtates about the ſame time, and conſequently affect other ſtates by their vicinity, and by many different relations which they frequently bear to one another; then is one of thoſe periods formed, at which the chain ſpoken of is ſo broken as to have little or no real or viſible connexion with that which we ſee continue. A new ſituation, different from the former, begets new intereſts in the ſame proportion of difference; not in this or that particular ſtate alone, but in all thoſe that are concerned by vicinity or other relations, as I ſaid juſt now,

in

in one general ſyſtem of policy. New intereſts beget new maxims of government, and new methods of conduct. Theſe, in their turns, beget new manners, new habits, new cuſtoms. The longer this new conſtitution of affairs continues, the more will this difference increaſe: and altho ſome analogy may remain long between what preceded and what ſucceeds ſuch a period, yet will this analogy ſoon become an object of mere curioſity, not of profitable enquiry. Such a period therefore is, in the true ſenſe of the words, an epocha or an aera, a point of time at which you ſtop, or from which you reckon forward. I ſay forward; becauſe we are not to ſtudy in the preſent caſe, as chronologers compute, backward. Should we perſiſt to carry our reſearches much higher, and to puſh them even to ſome other period of the ſame kind, we ſhould miſemploy our time; the cauſes then laid having ſpent themſelves, the ſeries of effects derived from them being over, and our concern in both conſequently at an end. But a new ſyſtem of cauſes and effects, that ſubſiſts in our time, and whereof our conduct is to be a part, ariſing at the laſt period, and all that paſſes in our time being dependent on what has paſſed ſince that period, or being immediately relative to it, we are extremely concerned to be well informed about all thoſe paſſages. To be entirely ignorant about the ages that precede this aera would be ſhameful. Nay ſome indulgence may be had to a temperate curioſity in the review of them. But to be learned about them is a ridiculous affectation in any man who means to be uſeful to the preſent age. Down to this aera let us read hiſtory: from this aera, and down to our own time, let us ſtudy it.

THE end of the fifteenth century ſeems to be juſt ſuch a period as I have been deſcribing, for thoſe who live in the eighteenth, and who inhabit the weſtern parts of Europe. A little

little before, or a little after this point of time, all thoſe events happened, and all thoſe revolutions began, that have produced ſo vaſt a change in the manners, cuſtoms, and intereſts of particular nations, and in the whole policy, eccleſiaſtical and civil, of theſe parts of the world. I muſt deſcend here into ſome detail, not of hiſtories, collections, or memorials; for all theſe are well enough known: and tho the contents are in the heads of few, the books are in the hands of many. But inſtead of ſhewing your lordſhip where to look, I ſhall contribute more to your entertainment and inſtruction, by marking out, as well as my memory will ſerve me to do it, what you are to look for, and by furniſhing a kind of clue to your ſtudies. I ſhall give, according to cuſtom, the firſt place to religion.

A view of the eccleſiaſtical government of Europe from the beginning of the ſixteenth century.

Observe then, my lord, that the demolition of the papal throne was not attempted with ſucceſs till the beginning of the ſixteenth century. If you are curious to caſt your eyes back, you will find Berenger in the eleventh, who was ſoon ſilenced; Arnoldus in the ſame, who was ſoon hanged; Valdo in the twelfth, and our Wickliff in the fourteenth, as well as others perhaps whom I do not recollect. Sometimes the doctrines of the church were alone attacked; and ſometimes the doctrine, the diſcipline, and the uſurpations of the pope. But little fires, kindled in corners of a dark world, were ſoon ſtifled by that great abettor of chriſtian unity, the hangman. When they ſpred and blazed out, as in the caſe of the Albigeois and of the Huſſites, armies were raiſed to extinguiſh them by torrents of blood; and ſuch ſaints as Dominic, with the

crucifix in their hands, inſtigated the troops to the utmoſt barbarity. Your lordſhip will find that the church of Rome was maintained by ſuch charitable and ſalutary means, among others, till the period ſpoken of: and you will be curious, I am ſure, to enquire how this period came to be more fatal to her than any former conjuncture. A multitude of circumſtances, which you will eaſily trace in the hiſtories of the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries, to go no further back, concurred to bring about this great event: and a multitude of others, as eaſy to be traced, concurred to hinder the demolition from becoming total, and to prop the tottering fabric. Among theſe circumſtances, there is one leſs complicated and more obvious than others, which was of principal and univerſal influence. The art of printing had been invented about forty or fifty years before the period we fix: from that time, the reſurrection of letters haſtened on a-pace; and at this period they had made great progreſs, and were cultivated with great application. MAHOMET the ſecond drove them out of the eaſt into the weſt; and the popes proved worſe politicians than the mufties in this reſpect. NICHOLAS the fifth encouraged learning and learned men. SIXTUS the fourth was, if I miſtake not, a great collector of books at leaſt: and LEO the tenth was the patron of every art and ſcience. The magicians themſelves broke the charm by which they had bound mankind for ſo many ages: and the adventure of that knight-errant, who, thinking himſelf happy in the arms of a celeſtial nymph, found that he was the miſerable ſlave of an infernal hag, was in ſome ſort renewed. As ſoon as the means of acquiring and ſpreading information grew common, it is no wonder that a ſyſtem was unravelled, which could not have been woven with ſucceſs in any ages, but thoſe of groſs ignorance, and credulous ſuperſtition. I might point out to your lordſhip many other immediate cauſes, ſome general like this

that

that I have mentioned, and ſome particular. The great ſchiſm, for inſtance, that ended in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and in the council of Conſtance, had occaſioned prodigious ſcandal. Two or three vicars of CHRIST, two or three infallible heads of the church roaming about the world at a time, furniſhed matter of ridicule as well as ſcandal: and whilſt they appealed, for ſo they did in effect, to the laity, and reproached and excommunicated one another, they taught the world what to think of the inſtitution, as well as exerciſe of the papal authority. The ſame leſſon was taught by the council of Piſa, that preceded, and by that of Baſle, that followed the council of Conſtance. The horrid crimes of ALEXANDER the ſixth, the ſawcy ambition of JULIUS the ſecond, the immenſe profuſion and ſcandalous exactions of LEO the tenth; all theſe events and characters, following in a continued ſeries from the beginning of one century, prepared the way for the revolution that happened in the beginning of the next. The ſtate of Germany, the ſtate of England, and that of the North, were particular cauſes, in theſe ſeveral countries, of this revolution. Such were many remarkable events that happened about the ſame time, and a little before it, in theſe and in other nations; and ſuch were likewiſe the characters of many of the princes of that age, ſome of whom favored the reformation, like the elector of Saxony, on a principle of conſcience; and moſt of whom favored it, juſt as others oppoſed it, on a principle of intereſt. This your lordſhip will diſcover manifeſtly to have been the caſe; and the ſole difference you will find between HENRY the eighth and FRANCIS the firſt, one of whom ſeparated from the pope, as the other adhered to him, is this: HENRY the eighth divided, with the ſecular clergy and his people, the ſpoil of the pope, and his ſatellites, the monks; FRANCIS the firſt divided, with the pope, the ſpoil of his clergy, ſecular and regular, and of his people.

With the ſame impartial eye that your lordſhip ſurveys the abuſes of religion, and the corruptions of the church as well as court of Rome, which brought on the reformation at this period; you will obſerve the characters and conduct of thoſe who began, who propagated, and who favored the reformation: and from your obſervation of theſe, as well as of the unſyſtematical manner in which it was carried on at the ſame time in various places, and of the want of concert, nay even of charity, among the reformers, you will learn what to think of the ſeveral religions that unite in their oppoſition to the Roman, and yet hate one another moſt heartily; what to think of the ſeveral ſects that have ſprouted, like ſuckers, from the ſame great roots; and what the true principles are of proteſtant eccleſiaſtical policy. This policy had no being till LUTHER made his eſtabliſhment in Germany; till ZWINGLIUS began another in Swiſſerland, which CALVIN carried on, and, like AMERICUS VESPUTIUS who followed CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, robbed the firſt adventurer of his honor; and till the reformation in our country was perfected under EDWARD the ſixth and ELIZABETH. Even popiſh eccleſiaſtical policy is no longer the ſame ſince that aera. His holineſs is no longer at the head of the whole weſtern church: and to keep the part that adheres to him, he is obliged to looſen their chains, and to lighten his yoke. The ſpirit and pretenſions of his court are the ſame, but not the power. He governs by expedient and management more, and by authority leſs. His decrees and his briefs are in danger of being refuſed, explained away, or evaded, unleſs he negotiates their acceptance before he gives them, governs in concert with his flock, and feeds his ſheep according to their humor and intereſt. In ſhort, his excommunications, that made the greateſt emperors tremble, are deſpiſed by the loweſt members of his own communion; and the remaining attachment to him has been, from this aera,

rather a political expedient to preſerve an appearance of unity, than a principle of conſcience; whatever ſome bigotted princes may have thought, whatever ambitious prelates and hireling ſcribiers may have taught, and whatever a people, worked up to enthuſiaſm by fanatical preachers, may have acted. Proofs of this would be eaſy to draw, not only from the conduct of ſuch princes as FERDINAND the firſt and MAXIMILIAN the ſecond, who could ſcarce be eſteemed papiſts tho they continued in the pope's communion; but even from that of princes who perſecuted their proteſtant ſubjects with great violence. Enough has been ſaid, I think, to ſhew your lordſhip how little need there is of going up higher than the beginning of the ſixteenth century in the ſtudy of hiſtory, to acquire all the knowledge neceſſary at this time in eccleſiaſtical policy, or in civil policy as far as it is relative to this. Hiſtorical monuments of this ſort are in every man's hand, the facts are ſufficiently verified, and the entire ſcenes lie open to our obſervation: even that ſcene of ſolemn refined banter exhibited in the council of Trent, impoſes on no man who reads PAOLO, as well as PALLAVICINI, and the letters of VARGAS.

A view of the civil government of Europe in the beginning of the ſixteenth century.

I. In FRANCE.

A VERY little higher need we go, to obſerve thoſe great changes in the civil conſtitutions of the principal nations of Europe, in the partition of power among them, and by conſequence in the whole ſyſtem of European policy, which have operated ſo ſtrongly for more than two centuries, and which operate ſtill. I will not affront the memory of our HENRY the

the ſeventh ſo much as to compare him to LEWIS the eleventh: and yet I perceive ſome reſemblance between them; which would perhaps appear greater, if PHILIP of Commines had wrote the hiſtory of HENRY as well as that of LEWIS; or if my lord BACON had wrote that of LEWIS as well as that of HENRY. This prince came to the crown of England a little before the cloſe of the fifteenth century: and LEWIS began his reign in France about twenty years ſooner. Theſe reigns make remarkable periods in the hiſtories of both nations. To reduce the power, privileges, and poſſeſſions of the nobility, and to increaſe the wealth and authority of the crown, was the principal object of both. In this their ſucceſs was ſo great, that the conſtitutions of the two governments have had, ſince that time, more reſemblance, in name and in form than in reality, to the conſtitutions that prevailed before. LEWIS the eleventh was the firſt, ſay the French, "qui mit les rois hors de page." The independency of the nobility had rendered the ſtate of his predeceſſors very dependent, and their power precarious. They were the ſovereigns of great vaſſals; but theſe vaſſals were ſo powerful, that one of them was ſometimes able, and two or three of them always, to give law to the ſovereign. Before LEWIS came to the crown, the Engliſh had been driven out of their poſſeſſions in France, by the poor character of HENRY the ſixth, the domeſtic troubles of his reign, and the defection of the houſe of Burgundy from his alliance, much more than by the ability of CHARLES the ſeventh, who ſeems to have been neither a greater hero nor a greater politician than HENRY the ſixth; and even than by the vigor and union of the French nobility in his ſervice. After LEWIS came to the crown, EDWARD the fourth made a ſhew of carrying the war again into France; but he ſoon returned home, and your lordſhip will not be at a loſs to find much better reaſons for his doing ſo, in the ſituation of his affairs and the characters

of

of his allies, than thoſe which PHILIP of Commines draws from the artifice of LEWIS, from his good cheer, and his penſions. Now from this time our pretenſions on France were in effect given up: and CHARLES the bold, the laſt prince of the houſe of Burgundy, being killed, LEWIS had no vaſſal able to moleſt him. He re-united the dutchy of Burgundy and Artois to his crown, he acquired Provence by gift, and his ſon Britany by marriage: and thus France grew, in the courſe of a few years, into that great and compact body which we behold at this time. The hiſtory of France, before this period, is like that of Germany, a complicated hiſtory of ſeveral ſtates and ſeveral intereſts; ſometimes concurring like members of the ſame monarchy, and ſometimes warring on one another. Since this period, the hiſtory of France is the hiſtory of one ſtate under a more uniform and orderly government; the hiſtory of a monarchy wherein the prince is poſſeſſor of ſome, as well as lord of all the great fieffes: and, the authority of many tyrants centering in one, tho the people are not become more free, yet the whole ſyſtem of domeſtic policy is entirely changed. Peace at home is better ſecured, and the nation grown fitter to carry war abroad. The governors of great provinces and of ſtrong fortreſſes have oppoſed their king, and taken arms againſt his authority and commiſſion ſince that time: but yet there is no more reſemblance between the authority and pretenſions of theſe governors, or the nature and occaſions of theſe diſputes, and the authority and pretenſions of the vaſſals of the crown in former days, or the nature and occaſions of their diſputes with the prince and with one another, than there is between the antient and the preſent peers of France. In a word, the conſtitution is ſo altered, that any knowledge we can acquire about it in the hiſtory that precedes this period, will ſerve to little purpoſe in our ſtudy of the hiſtory that follows it, and to leſs

purpoſe

purpoſe ſtill in aſſiſting us to judge of what paſſes in the preſent age. The kings of France ſince that time, more maſters at home, have been able to exert themſelves more abroad: and they began to do ſo immediately; for CHARLES the eighth, ſon and ſucceſſor of LEWIS the eleventh, formed great deſigns of foreign conqueſts, tho they were diſappointed by his inability, by the levity of the nation, and by other cauſes. LEWIS the twelfth and FRANCIS the firſt, but eſpecially FRANCIS, meddled deep in the affairs of Europe: and tho the ſuperior genius of Ferdinand called the catholic, and the ſtar of CHARLES the fifth prevailed againſt them, yet the efforts they made ſhew ſufficiently how the ſtrength and importance of this monarchy were increaſed in their time. From whence we may date likewiſe the rivalſhip of the houſe of France, for we may reckon that of Valois and that of Bourbon as one upon this occaſion, and the houſe of Auſtria; that continues at this day, and that has coſt ſo much blood and ſo much treaſure in the courſe of it.

II. In ENGLAND.

THO the power and influence of the nobility ſunk in the great change that began under HENRY the ſeventh in England, as they did in that which began under LEWIS the eleventh in France; yet the new conſtitutions that theſe changes produced were very different. In France the lords alone loſt, the king alone gained; the clergy held their poſſeſſions and their immunities, and the people remained in a ſtate of mitigated ſlavery. But in England the people gained as well as the crown. The commons had already a ſhare in the legiſlature; ſo that the power and influence of the lords being broke by HENRY the ſeventh, and the property of the commons increaſing

creaſing by the ſale that his ſon made of church-lands, the power of the latter increaſed of courſe by this change in a conſtitution, the forms whereof were favorable to them. The union of the roſes put an end to the civil wars of York and Lancaſter, that had ſucceeded thoſe we commonly call the barons wars, and the humor of warring in France, that had laſted near four hundred years under the Normans and Plantagenets, for plunder as well as conqueſt, was ſpent. Our temple of JANUS was ſhut by HENRY the ſeventh. We neither laid waſte our own nor other countries any longer: and wiſe laws and a wiſe government changed inſenſibly the manners, and gave a new turn to the ſpirit of our people. We were no longer the free-booters we had been. Our nation maintained her reputation in arms whenever the public intereſt or the public authority required it; but war ceaſed to be, what it had been, our principal and almoſt our ſole profeſſion. The arts of peace prevailed among us. We became huſbandmen, manufacturers, and merchants, and we emulated neighboring nations in literature. It is from this time that we ought to ſtudy the hiſtory of our country, my lord, with the utmoſt application. We are not much concerned to know with critical accuracy what were the antient forms of our parliaments, concerning which, however, there is little room for diſpute from the reign of HENRY the third at leaſt; nor in ſhort the whole ſyſtem of our civil conſtitution before HENRY the ſeventh, and of our eccleſiaſtical conſtitution before HENRY the eighth. But he who has not ſtudied and acquired a thorough knowledge of them both, from theſe periods down to the preſent time, in all the variety of events by which they have been affected, will be very unfit to judge or take care of either. Juſt as little are we concerned to know, in any nice detail, what the conduct of our princes, relatively to our neighbours on the continent, was before this period, and at a time

when the partition of power and a multitude of other circumſtances rendered the whole political ſyſtem of Europe ſo vaſtly different from that which has exiſted ſince. But he who has not traced this conduct from the period we fix, down to the preſent age, wants a principal part of the knowledge that every Engliſh miniſter of ſtate ſhould have. Ignorance in the reſpects here ſpoken of is the leſs pardonable, becauſe we have more, and more authentic, means of information concerning this, than concerning any other period. Anecdotes enow to glut the curioſity of ſome perſons, and to ſilence all the captious cavils of others, will never be furniſhed by any portion of hiſtory; nor indeed can they according to the nature and courſe of human affairs: but he who is content to read and obſerve, like a ſenator and a ſtateſman, will find in our own and in foreign hiſtorians as much information as he wants, concerning the affairs of our iſland, her fortune at home and her conduct abroad, from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth. I refer to foreign hiſtorians, as well as to our own, for this ſeries of our own hiſtory; not only becauſe it is reaſonable to ſee in what manner the hiſtorians of other countries have related the tranſactions wherein we have been concerned, and what judgment they have made of our conduct, domeſtic and foreign, but for another reaſon likewiſe. Our nation has furniſhed as ample and as important matter, good and bad, for hiſtory, as any nation under the ſun: and yet we muſt yield the palm in writing hiſtory moſt certainly to the Italians and to the French, and, I fear, even to the Germans. The only two pieces of hiſtory we have, in any reſpect to be compared with the antient, are, the Reign of HENRY the ſeventh by my lord BACON, and the Hiſtory of our civil wars in the laſt century by your noble anceſtor my lord chancellor CLARENDON. But we have no general hiſtory to be compared with ſome of other countries: neither have we, which I lament much more, particular

ticular hiſtories, except the two I have mentioned, nor writers of memorials, nor collectors of monuments and anecdotes, to vie in number or in merit with thoſe that foreign nations can boaſt; from COMMINES, GUICCIARDIN, DU BELLAY, PAOLO, DAVILA, THUANUS, and a multitude of others, down through the whole period that I propoſe to your lordſhip. But altho this be true, to our ſhame; yet it is true likewiſe that we want no neceſſary means of information. They lie open to our induſtry and our diſcernment. Foreign writers are for the moſt part ſcarce worth reading when they ſpeak of our domeſtic affairs; nor are our Engliſh writers for the moſt part of greater value when they ſpeak of foreign affairs. In this mutual defect, the writers of other countries are, I think, more excuſable than ours: for the nature of our government, the political principles in which we are bred, our diſtinct intereſts as iſlanders, and the complicated various intereſts and humors of our parties, all theſe are ſo peculiar to ourſelves, and ſo different from the notions, manners, and habits of other nations, that it is not wonderful they ſhould be puzzled or ſhould fall into error, when they undertake to give relations of events that reſult from all theſe, or to paſs any judgment upon them. But as theſe hiſtorians are mutually defective, ſo they mutually ſupply each other's defects. We muſt compare them therefore, make uſe of our diſcernment, and draw our concluſions from both. If we proceed in this manner, we have an ample fund of hiſtory in our power, from whence to collect ſufficient authentic information; and we muſt proceed in this manner, even with our own hiſtorians of different religions, ſects, and parties, or run the riſque of being miſled by domeſtic ignorance and prejudice in this caſe, as well as by foreign ignorance and prejudice in the other.

III. In SPAIN and the EMPIRE.

SPAIN figured little in Europe till the latter part of the fifteenth century; till Caſtile and Arragon were united by the marriage of FERDINAND and ISABELLA; till the total expulſion of the Moors, and till the diſcovery of the Weſt-Indies. After this, not only Spain took a new form, and grew into immenſe power; but, the heir of FERDINAND and ISABELLA being heir likewiſe of the houſes of Burgundy and Auſtria, ſuch an extent of dominion accrued to him by all theſe ſucceſſions, and ſuch an addition of rank and authority by his election to the empire, as no prince had been maſter of in Europe from the days of CHARLES the great. It is proper to obſerve here how the policy of the Germans altered in the choice of an emperor; becauſe the effects of this alteration have been great. When RODOLPHUS of Hapſburg was choſe in the year one thouſand two hundred and ſeventy, or about that time, the poverty and the low eſtate of this prince, who had been marſhal of the court to a king of Bohemia, was an inducement to elect him. The diſorderly and lawleſs ſtate of the empire made the princes of it in thoſe days unwilling to have a more powerful head. But a contrary maxim took place at this aera: CHARLES the fifth and FRANCIS the firſt, the two moſt powerful princes of Europe, were the ſole candidates; for the elector of Saxony, who is ſaid to have declined, was rather unable to ſtand in competition with them: and CHARLES was choſen by the unanimous ſuffrages of the electoral college, if I miſtake not. Another CHARLES, CHARLES the fourth, who was made emperor illegally enough on the depoſition of LEWIS of Bavaria, and about one hundred and fifty years before, ſeems to me to have contributed doubly to eſtabliſh this maxim; by the wiſe conſtitutions that he procured to paſs,

that united the empire in a more orderly form and better ſyſtem of gove·nment; and by alienating the imperial revenues to ſuch a deg·ee, that they were no longer ſufficient to ſupport an emperor who had not great revenues of his own. The ſame maxim and other circumſtances have concurred to keep the empire in this family ever ſince, as it had been often before; and this family having large dominions in the empire, and larger pretenſions, as well as dominions, out of it, the other ſtates of Europe, France, Spain and England particularly, have been more concerned ſince this period in the affairs of Germany, than they were before it: and by conſequence the hiſtory of Germany, from the beginning of the ſixteenth century, is of importance, and a neceſſary part of that knowledge which your lordſhip deſires to acquire.

The Dutch commonwealth was not formed till near a century later. But as ſoon as it was formed, nay even whilſt it was forming, theſe provinces, that were loſt to obſervation among the many that compoſed the dominions of Burgundy and Auſtria, became ſo conſiderable a part of the political ſyſtem of Europe, that their hiſtory muſt be ſtudied by every man who would inform himſelf of this ſyſtem.

Soon after this ſtate had taken being, others of a more antient original began to mingle in thoſe diſputes and wars, thoſe councils, negotiations, and treaties, that are to be the principal objects of your lordſhip's application in the ſtudy of hiſtory. That of the northern crowns deſerves your attention little, before the laſt century. Till the election of Frederic the firſt to the crown of Denmark, and till that wonderful revolution which the firſt Gustavus brought about in Sweden, it is nothing more than a confuſed rhapſody of events, in which the great kingdoms and ſtates of Europe neither had any concern,

concern, nor took any part. From the time I have mentioned, the northern crowns have turned their counſels and their arms often ſouthwards, and Sweden particularly, with prodigious effect.

To what purpoſe ſhould I trouble your lordſhip with the mention of hiſtories of other nations? They are either ſuch as have no relation to the knowledge you would acquire, like that of the Poles, the Muſcovites, or the Turks; or they are ſuch as, having an occaſional or a ſecondary relation to it, fall of courſe into your ſcheme; like the hiſtory of Italy for inſtance, which is ſometimes a part of that of France, ſometimes of that of Spain, and ſometimes of that of Germany. The thread of hiſtory that you are to keep, is that of the nations who are and muſt always be concerned in the ſame ſcenes of action with your own. Theſe are the principal nations of the weſt. Things that have no immediate relation to your own country, or to them, are either too remote, or too minute, to employ much of your time: and their hiſtory and your own is, for all your purpoſes, the whole hiſtory of Europe.

The two great powers, that of France and that of Auſtria, being formed, and a rivalſhip eſtabliſhed by conſequence between them; it began to be the intereſt of their neighbors to oppoſe the ſtrongeſt and moſt enterpriſing of the two, and to be the ally and friend of the weakeſt. From hence aroſe the notion of a balance of power in Europe, on the equal poize of which the ſafety and tranquillity of all muſt depend. To deſtroy the equality of this balance has been the aim of each of theſe rivals in his turn: and to hinder it from being deſtroyed, by preventing too much power from falling into one ſcale, has been the principle of all the wiſe councils of

of Europe, relatively to France and to the houſe of Auſtria, through the whole period that began at the aera we have fixed, and ſubſiſts at this hour. To make a careful and juſt obſervation, therefore, of the riſe and decline of theſe powers, in the two laſt centuries and in the preſent; of the projects which their ambition formed; of the means they employed to carry theſe projects on with ſucceſs; of the means employed by others to defeat them; of the iſſue of all theſe endeavors in war and in negociation; and particularly, to bring your obſervations home to your own country and your own uſe, of the conduct that England held, to her honor or diſhonor, to her advantage or diſadvantage, in every one of the numerous and important conjunctures that happened---- ought to be the principal ſubject of your lordſhip's attention in reading and reflecting on this part of modern hiſtory.

Now to this purpoſe you will find it of great uſe, my lord, when you have a general plan of the hiſtory in your mind, to go over the whole again in another method; which I propoſe to be this. Divide the entire period into ſuch particular periods as the general courſe of affairs will mark out to you ſufficiently, by the riſe of new conjunctures, of different ſchemes of conduct, and of different theatres of action. Examine this period of hiſtory as you would examine a tragedy or a comedy; that is, take firſt the idea or a general notion of the whole, and after that examine every act and every ſcene apart. Conſider them in themſelves, and conſider them relatively to one another. Read this hiſtory as you would that of any antient period; but ſtudy it afterwards, as it would not be worth your while to ſtudy the other; nay as you could not have in your power the means of ſtudying the other, if the ſtudy was really worth your while. The former part of this period abounds in great hiſtorians: and the latter part

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is ſo modern, that even tradition is authentic enough to ſupply the want of good hiſtory, if we are curious to enquire, and if we hearken to the living with the ſame impartiality and freedom of judgment as we read the dead: and he that does one, will do the other. The whole period abounds in memorials, in collections of public acts and monuments, of private letters, and of treaties. All theſe muſt come into your plan of ſtudy, my lord: many not to be red through, but all to be conſulted and compared. They muſt not lead you, I think, to your enquiries, but your enquiries muſt lead you to them. By joining hiſtory and that which we call the materia hiſtorica together in this manner, and by drawing your information from both, your lordſhip will acquire not only that knowledge, which many have in ſome degree, of the great tranſactions that have paſſed, and the great events that have happened in Europe during this period, and of their immediate and obvious cauſes and conſequences; but your lordſhip will acquire a much ſuperior knowledge, and ſuch a one as very few men poſſeſs almoſt in any degree, a knowledge of the true political ſyſtem of Europe during this time. You will ſee it in it's primitive principles, in the conſtitutions of governments, the ſituations of countries, their national and true intereſts, the characters and the religion of people, and other permanent circumſtances. You will trace it through all its fluctuations, and obſerve how the objects vary ſeldom, but the means perpetually, according to the different characters of princes and of thoſe who govern; the different abilities of thoſe who ſerve; the courſe of accidents, and a multitude of other irregular and contingent circumſtances.

The particular periods into which the whole period ſhould be divided, in my opinion, are theſe. 1. From the fifteenth to the end of the ſixteenth century. 2. From thence to the

the Pyrenean treaty. 3. From thence down to the preſent time.

YOUR lordſhip will find this diviſion as apt and as proper, relatively to the particular hiſtories of England, France, Spain, and Germany, the principal nations concerned, as it is relatively to the general hiſtory of Europe.

THE death of queen ELIZABETH, and the acceſſion of king JAMES the firſt, made a vaſt alteration in the government of our nation at home, and in her conduct abroad, about the end of the firſt of theſe periods. The wars that religion occaſioned, and ambition fomented in France, through the reigns of FRANCIS the ſecond, CHARLES the ninth, HENRY the third, and a part of HENRY the fourth, ended: and the furies of the league were cruſhed by this great prince, about the ſame time. PHILIP the ſecond of Spain marks this period likewiſe by his death, and by the exhauſted condition in which he left the monarchy he governed: which took the lead no longer in diſturbing the peace of mankind, but acted a ſecond part in abetting the bigotry and ambition of FERDINAND the ſecond and the third. The thirty years war that devaſted Germany did not begin till the eighteenth year of the ſeventeenth century, but the ſeeds of it were ſowing ſome time before, and even at the end of the ſixteenth. FERDINAND the firſt and MAXIMILIAN had ſhewn much lenity and moderation in the diſputes and troubles that aroſe on account of religion. Under RODOLPHUS and MATTHIAS, as the ſucceſſion of their couſin FERDINAND approached, the fires that were covered began to ſmoke and to ſparkle: and if the war did not begin with this century, the preparation for it, and the expectation of it did.

THE ſecond period ends in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, the year of the reſtoration of CHARLES the ſecond to the throne of England; when our civil wars, and all the diſorders which CROMWELL's uſurpation had produced, were over; and therefore a remarkable point of time, with reſpect to our country. It is no leſs remarkable with reſpect to Germany, Spain, and France.

AS to Germany; the ambitious projects of the German branch of Auſtria had been entirely defeated, the peace of the empire had been reſtored, and almoſt a new conſtitution formed, or an old one revived, by the treaties of Weſtphalia; nay the imperial eagle was not only fallen, but her wings were clipped.

AS to Spain; the Spaniſh branch was fallen as low twelve years afterwards, that is, in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty. PHILIP the ſecond left his ſucceſſors a ruined monarchy. He left them ſomething worſe; he left them his example and his principles of government, founded in ambition, in pride, in ignorance, in bigotry, and all the pedantry of ſtate. I have red ſomewhere or other, that the war of the Low Countries alone coſt him, by his own confeſſion, five hundred and ſixty four millions, a prodigious ſum in what ſpecies ſoever he reckoned. PHILIP the third and PHILIP the fourth followed his example and his principles of government, at home and abroad. At home, there was much form, but no good order, no oeconomy, nor wiſdom of policy in the ſtate. The church continued to devour the ſtate, and that monſter the inquiſition to diſpeople the country, even more than perpetual war, and all the numerous colonies that Spain had ſent to the Weſt-Indies: for your lordſhip will find that PHILIP the third drove more than nine hundred thouſand Moriſcoes

riſcoes out of his dominions by one edict, with ſuch circumſtances of inhumanity in the execution of it, as Spaniards alone could exerciſe, and that tribunal, who had provoked this unhappy race to revolt, could alone approve. Abroad, the conduct of theſe princes was directed by the ſame wild ſpirit of ambition: raſh in undertaking tho ſlow to execute, and obſtinate in purſuing tho unable to ſucceed, they opened a new ſluice to let out the little life and vigor that remained in their monarchy. PHILIP the ſecond is ſaid to have been piqued againſt his uncle FERDINAND, for refuſing to yield the empire to him on the abdication of CHARLES the fifth. Certain it is, that as much as he loved to diſturb the peace of mankind, and to meddle in every quarrel that had the appearance of ſupporting the Roman and oppreſſing every other church, he meddled little in the affairs of Germany. But, FERDINAND and MAXIMILIAN dead, and the off-ſpring of MAXIMILIAN extinct, the kings of Spain eſpouſed the intereſts of the other branch of their family, entertained remote views of ambition in favor of their own branch, even on that ſide, and made all the enterpriſes of FERDINAND of Gratz, both before and after his elevation to the empire, the common cauſe of the houſe of Auſtria. What completed their ruin was this: they knew not how to loſe, nor when to yield. They acknowledged the independency of the Dutch commonwealth, and became the allies of their antient ſubjects at the treaty of Munſter: but they would not forego their uſurped claim on Portugal, and they perſiſted to carry on ſingly the war againſt France. Thus they were reduced to ſuch a lowneſs of power as can hardly be paralleled in any other caſe: and PHILIP the fourth was obliged at laſt to conclude a peace, on terms repugnant to his inclination, to that of his people, to the intereſt of Spain, and to that of all Europe, in the Pyrenean treaty.

As to France; this aera of the entire fall of the Spaniſh power is likewiſe that from which we may reckon that France grew as formidable, as we have ſeen her, to her neighbours, in power and pretenſions. HENRY the fourth meditated great deſigns, and prepared to act a great part in Europe in the very beginning of this period, when RAVAILLAC ſtabbed him. His deſigns died with him, and are rather gueſſed at than known; for ſurely thoſe which his hiſtorian PEREFIXE and the compilers of SULLY's memorials aſcribe to him, of a chriſtian commonwealth, divided into fifteen ſtates, and of a ſenate to decide all differences, and to maintain this new conſtitution of Europe, are too chimerical to have been really his: but his general deſign of abaſing the houſe of Auſtria, and eſtabliſhing the ſuperior power in that of Bourbon, was taken up, about twenty years after his death, by RICHELIEU, and was purſued by him and by MAZARIN with ſo much ability and ſucceſs, that it was effected entirely by the treaties of Weſtphalia and by the Pyrenean treaty; that is, at the end of the ſecond of thoſe periods I have preſumed to propoſe to your lordſhip.

WHEN—the third, in which we now are, will end, and what circumſtances will mark the end of it, I know not: but this I know, that the great events and revolutions, which have happened in the courſe of it, intereſt us ſtill more nearly than thoſe of the two precedent periods. I intended to have drawn up an elenchus or ſummary of the three, but I doubted, on further reflection, whether my memory would enable me to do it with exactneſs enough: and I ſaw that, if I was able to do it, the deduction would be immeaſurably long. Something of this kind however it may be reaſonable to attempt, in ſpeaking of the laſt period: which

which may hereafter occaſion a further trouble to your lordſhip.

But to give you ſome breathing-time, I will poſtpone it at preſent, and am in the mean while,

My Lord,

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

A ſketch of the ſtate and hiſtory of Europe, from the Pyrenean treaty in one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty nine, to the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight.

THE firſt obſervation I ſhall make on this third period of modern hiſtory is, that as the ambition of CHARLES the fifth, who united the whole formidable power of Auſtria in himſelf, and the reſtleſs temper, the cruelty and bigotry of PHILIP the ſecond, were principally objects of the attention and ſolicitude of the councils of Europe, in the firſt of theſe periods; and as the ambition of FERDINAND the ſecond, and the third, who aimed at nothing leſs than extirpating the proteſtant intereſt, and under that pretence ſubduing the liberties of Germany, were objects of the ſame kind in the ſecond: ſo an oppoſition to the growing power of France, or to ſpeak more properly, to the exorbitant ambition of the houſe of Bourbon, has been the principal affair of Europe, during the greateſt part of the preſent period. The deſign of aſpiring to univerſal monarchy was imputed to CHARLES the fifth, as ſoon as he began to give proofs of his ambition and capacity. The ſame deſign was imputed to LEWIS the fourteenth, as ſoon as he began to feel his own ſtrength, and the weakneſs of his neighbours. Neither of theſe princes was induced, I believe, by the flattery of his courtiers, or the apprehenſions of his adverſaries, to entertain ſo chimerical a deſign as this would have been, even in that falſe ſenſe wherein the word univerſal

univerſal is ſo often underſtood: and I miſtake very much if either of them was of a character, or in circumſtances, to undertake it. Both of them had ſtrong deſires to raiſe their families higher, and to extend their dominions farther; but neither of them had that bold and adventurous ambition which makes a conqueror and an hero. Theſe apprehenſions however were given wiſely, and taken uſefully. They cannot be given nor taken too ſoon when ſuch powers as theſe ariſe; becauſe when ſuch powers as theſe are beſieged as it were early, by the common policy and watchfulneſs of their neighbours, each of them may in his turn of ſtrength ſally forth, and gain a little ground; but none of them will be able to puſh their conqueſts far, and much leſs to conſummate the entire projects of their ambition. Beſides the occaſional oppoſition that was given to CHARLES the fifth by our HENRY the eighth, according to the different moods of humor he was in; by the popes, according to the ſeveral turns of their private intereſt; and by the princes of Germany, according to the occaſions or pretences that religion or civil liberty furniſhed; he had from his firſt ſetting out a rival and an enemy in FRANCIS the firſt, who did not maintain his cauſe "in forma pauperis," if I may uſe ſuch an expreſſion: as we have ſeen the houſe of Auſtria ſue, in our days, for dominion at the gate of every palace in Europe. Francis the firſt was the principal in his own quarrels, paid his own armies, fought his own battles; and tho his valour alone did not hinder CHARLES the fifth from ſubduing all Europe, as BAYLE, a better philologer than politician, ſomewhere aſſerts, but a multitude of other circumſtances eaſily to be traced in hiſtory; yet he contributed by his victories, and even by his defeats, to waſte the ſtrength and check the courſe of that growing power. LEWIS the fourteenth had no rival of this kind in the houſe of Auſtria, nor indeed any enemy of this importance to combat, till the prince

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of ORANGE became king of Great Britain: and he had great advantages in many other reſpects, which it is neceſſary to conſider in order to make a true judgment on the affairs of Europe from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty. You will diſcover the firſt of theſe advantages, and ſuch as were productive of all the reſt, in the conduct of RICHELIEU and of MAZARIN. RICHELIEU formed the great deſign, and laid the foundations: MAZARIN purſued the deſign, and raiſed the ſuperſtructure. If I do not deceive myſelf extremely, there are few paſſages in hiſtory that deſerve your lordſhip's attention more than the conduct that the firſt and greateſt of theſe miniſters held, in laying the foundations I ſpeak of. You will obſerve how he helped to embroil affairs on every ſide, and to keep the houſe of Auſtria at bay as it were; how he entered into the quarrels of Italy againſt Spain, into that concerning the Valteline, and that concerning the ſucceſſion of Mantua; without engaging ſo deep as to divert him from another great object of his policy, ſubduing Rochelle and diſarming the Huguenots. You will obſerve how he turned himſelf after this was done, to ſtop the progreſs of FERDINAND in Germany. While Spain fomented diſcontents at the court and diſorders in the kingdom of France, by all poſſible means, even by taking engagements with the duke of ROHAN, and for ſupporting the proteſtants; RICHELIEU abetted the ſame intereſt in Germany againſt FERDINAND; and in the Low Countries againſt Spain. The emperor was become almoſt the maſter in Germany. CHRISTIAN the fourth, king of Denmark, had been at the head of a league, wherein the United Provinces, Sweden, and Lower Saxony entered, to oppoſe his progreſs: but CHRISTIAN had been defeated by TILLY and VALSTEIN, and obliged to conclude a treaty at Lubec, where FERDINAND gave him the law. It was then that GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, with whom RICHELIEU made an alliance, entered into

into this war, and ſoon turned the fortune of it. The French miniſter had not yet engaged his maſter openly in the war; but when the Dutch grew impatient, and threatned to renew their truce with Spain, unleſs France declared; when the king of SWEDEN was killed, and the battle of Nordlingen loſt; when Saxony had turned again to the ſide of the emperor, and Brandenburg and ſo many others had followed this example, that Heſſe almoſt alone perſiſted in the Swediſh alliance: then RICHELIEU engaged his maſter, and profited of every circumſtance which the conjuncture afforded, to engage him with advantage. For, firſt, he had a double advantage by engaging ſo late: that of coming freſh into the quarrel againſt a wearied and almoſt exhauſted enemy; and that of yielding to the impatience of his friends, who, preſſed by their neceſſities and by the want they had of France, gave this miniſter an opportunity of laying thoſe claims and eſtabliſhing thoſe pretenſions, in all his treaties with Holland, Sweden, and the princes and ſtates of the empire, on which he had projected the future aggrandiſement of France. The manner in which he engaged, and the air that he gave to his engagement, were advantages of the ſecond ſort, advantages of reputation and credit; yet were theſe of no ſmall moment in the courſe of the war, and operated ſtrongly in favor of France as he deſigned they ſhould, even after his death, and at and after the treaties of Weſtphalia. He varniſhed ambition with the moſt plauſible and popular pretences. The elector of Treves had put himſelf under the protection of France: and, if I remember right, he made this ſtep when the emperor could not protect him againſt the Swedes, whom he had reaſon to apprehend. No matter, the governor of Luxemburg was ordered to ſurpriſe Treves and to ſeize the elector. He executed his orders with ſucceſs, and carried this prince priſoner into Brabant. RICHELIEU ſeized the lucky circumſtance; he reclaimed

the elector: and, on the refuſal of the cardinal infant, the war was declared. France, you ſee, appeared the common friend of liberty, the defender of it in the Low-Countries againſt the king of SPAIN, and in Germany againſt the emperor, as well as the protector of the princes of the empire, many of whoſe ſtates had been illegally invaded, and whoſe perſons were no longer ſafe from violence even in their own palaces. All theſe appearances were kept up in the negotiations at Munſter, where MAZARIN reaped what RICHELIEU had ſowed. The demands that France made for herſelf were very great; but the conjuncture was favorable, and ſhe improved it to the utmoſt. No figure could be more flattering than her's, at the head of theſe negotiations; nor more mortifying than the emperor's through the whole courſe of the treaty. The princes and ſtates of the empire had been treated as vaſſals by the emperor: France determined them to treat with him on this occaſion as ſovereigns, and ſupported them in this determination. Whilſt Sweden ſeemed concerned for the proteſtant intereſt alone, and ſhewed no other regard, as ſhe had no other alliance; France affected to be impartial alike to the proteſtant and to the papiſt, and to have no intereſt at heart but the common intereſt of the Germanic body. Her demands were exceſſive, but they were to be ſatisfied principally out of the emperor's patrimonial dominions. It had been the art of her miniſters to eſtabliſh this general maxim on many particular experiences, that the grandeur of France was a real, and would be a conſtant ſecurity to the rights and liberties of the empire againſt the emperor: and it is no wonder therefore, this maxim prevailing, injuries, reſentments, and jealouſies being freſh on one ſide, and ſervices, obligations, and confidence on the other, that the Germans were not unwilling France ſhould extend her empire on this ſide of the Rhine, whilſt Sweden did the ſame on this ſide of the Baltic. Theſe

treaties,

treaties, and the immenſe credit and influence that France had acquired by them in the empire, put it out of the power of one branch of the houſe of Auſtria to return the obligations of aſſiſtance to the other, in the war that continued between France and Spain, till the Pyrenean treaty. By this treaty the ſuperiority of the houſe of Bourbon over the houſe of Auſtria was not only completed and confirmed, but the great deſign of uniting the Spaniſh and the French monarchies under the former was laid.

THE third period therefore begins by a great change of the balance of power in Europe, and by the proſpect of one much greater and more fatal. Before I deſcend into the particulars I intend to mention, of the courſe of affairs, and of the political conduct of the great powers of Europe in this third period; give me leave to caſt my eyes once more back on the ſecond. The reflection I am going to make ſeems to me important, and leads to all that is to follow.

THE Dutch made their peace ſeparately at Munſter with Spain, who acknowledged then the ſovereignty and independency of their commonwealth. The French, who had been, after our ELIZABETH, their principal ſupport, reproached them ſeverely for this breach of faith. They excuſed themſelves in the beſt manner, and by the beſt reaſons, they could. All this your lordſhip will find in the monuments of that time. But I think it not improbable that they had a motive you will not find there, and which it was not proper to give as a reaſon or excuſe to the French. Might not the wiſe men amongſt them conſider even then, beſides the immediate advantages that accrued by this treaty to their commonwealth, that the imperial power was fallen; that the power of Spain was vaſtly reduced; that the houſe of Auſtria was nothing

more than the ſhadow of a great name, and that the houſe of Bourbon was advancing, by large ſtrides, to a degree of power as exorbitant, and as formidable as that of the other family had been in the hands of CHARLES the fifth, of PHILIP the ſecond, and lately of the two FERDINANDS? Might they not foreſee, even then, what happened in the courſe of very few years, when they were obliged, for their own ſecurity, to aſſiſt their old enemies the Spaniards againſt their old friends the French? I think they might. Our CHARLES the firſt was no great politician, and yet he ſeemed to diſcern that the balance of power was turning in favor of France, ſome years before the treaties of Weſtphalia. He refuſed to be neuter, and threatned to take part with Spain, if the French purſued the deſign of beſieging Dunkirk and Graveline, according to a concert taken between them and the Dutch, and in purſuance of a treaty for dividing the Spaniſh Low Countries, which RICHELIEU had negotiated. CROMWELL either did not diſcern this turn of the balance of power, long afterwards when it was much more viſible; or, diſcerning it, he was induced by reaſons of private intereſt to act againſt the general intereſt of Europe. CROMWELL joined with France againſt Spain, and tho he got Jamaica and Dunkirk, he drove the Spaniards into a neceſſity of making a peace with France, that has diſturbed the peace of the world almoſt fourſcore years, and the conſequences of which have well nigh beggared in our times the nation he enſlaved in his. There is a tradition, I have heard it from perſons who lived in theſe days, and I believe it came from THURLOE, that CROMWELL was in treaty with Spain, and ready to turn his arms againſt France when he died. If this fact was certain, as little as I honor his memory, I ſhould have ſome regret that he died ſo ſoon. But whatever his intentions were, we muſt charge the Pyrenean treaty, and the fatal conſequences of it, in great meaſure to his account. The

Spaniards

Spaniards abhorred the thought of marrying their Infanta to LEWIS the fourteenth. It was on this point that they broke the negociation LIONNE had begun: and your lordſhip will perceive, that if they reſumed it afterwards, and offered the marriage they had before rejected, CROMWELL's league with France was a principal inducement to this alteration of their reſolutions.

THE preciſe point at which the ſcales of power turn, like that of the ſolſtice in either tropic, is imperceptible to common obſervation: and, in one caſe as in the other, ſome progreſs muſt be made in the new direction, before the change is perceived. They who are in the ſinking ſcale, for in the political balance of power, unlike to all others, the ſcale that is empty ſinks, and that which is full riſes; they who are in the ſinking ſcale do not eaſily come off from the habitual prejudices of ſuperior wealth, or power, or ſkill, or courage, nor from the confidence that theſe prejudices inſpire. They who are in the riſing ſcale do not immediately feel their ſtrength, nor aſſume that confidence in it which ſucceſsful experience gives them afterwards. They who are the moſt concerned to watch the variations of this balance, miſ-judge often in the ſame manner, and from the ſame prejudices. They continue to dread a power no longer able to hurt them, or they continue to have no apprehenſions of a power that grows daily more formidable. Spain verified the firſt obſervation at the end of the ſecond period, when, proud and poor, and enterpriſing and feeble, ſhe ſtill thought herſelf a match for France. France verified the ſecond obſervation at the beginning of the third period, when the triple alliance ſtopped the progreſs of her arms, which alliances much more conſiderable were not able to effect afterwards. The other principal powers of Europe, in their turns, have verified the third obſervation

ſervation in both it's parts, through the whole courſe of this period.

WHEN LEWIS the fourteenth took the adminiſtration of affairs into his own hands, about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, he was in the prime of his age, and had, what princes ſeldom have, the advantages of youth and thoſe of experience together. Their education is generally bad; for which reaſon royal birth, that gives a right to the throne among other people, gave an abſolute excluſion from it among the Mamalukes. His was, in all reſpects, except one, as bad as that of other princes. He jeſted ſometimes on his own ignorance; and there were other defects in his character, owing to his education, which he did not ſee. But MAZARIN had initiated him betimes in the myſteries of his policy. He had ſeen a great part of thoſe foundations laid, on which he was to raiſe the fabric of his future grandeur: and as MAZARIN finiſhed the work that RICHELIEU began, he had the leſſons of one, and the examples of both, to inſtruct him. He had acquired habits of ſecrecy and method, in buſineſs; of reſerve, diſcretion, decency, and dignity, in behaviour. If he was not the greateſt king, he was the beſt actor of majeſty at leaſt, that ever filled a throne. He by no means wanted that courage which is commonly called bravery, tho the want of it was imputed to him in the midſt of his greateſt triumphs: nor that other courage, leſs oſtentatious and more rarely found, calm, ſteady, perſevering reſolution; which ſeems to ariſe leſs from the temper of the body, and is therefore called courage of the mind. He had them both moſt certainly, and I could produce unqueſtionable anecdotes in proof. He was, in one word, much ſuperior to any prince with whom he had to do, when he began to govern. He was ſurrounded with great captains bred in former wars, and with great miniſters bred in

the ſame ſchool as himſelf. They who had worked under MAZARIN worked on the ſame plan under him; and as they had the advantages of genius and experience over moſt of the miniſters of other countries, ſo they had another advantage over thoſe who were equal or ſuperior to them: the advantage of ſerving a maſter whoſe abſolute power was eſtabliſhed; and the advantage of a ſituation wherein they might exert their whole capacity without contradiction; over that, for inſtance, wherein your lordſhip's great grand-father was placed, at the ſame time, in England, and JOHN DE WIT in Holland. Among theſe miniſters, COLBERT muſt be mentioned particularly upon this occaſion; becauſe it was he who improved the wealth, and conſequently the power of France extremely, by the order he put into the finances, and by the encouragement he gave to trade and manufactures. The ſoil, the climate, the ſituation of France, the ingenuity, the induſtry, the vivacity of her inhabitants are ſuch; ſhe has ſo little want of the product of other countries, and other countries have ſo many real or imaginary wants to be ſupplied by her; that when ſhe is not at war with all her neighbours, when her domeſtic quiet is preſerved and any tolerable adminiſtration of government prevails, ſhe muſt grow rich at the expence of thoſe who trade, and even of thoſe who do not open a trade, with her. Her bawbles, her modes, the follies and extravagancies of her luxury, coſt England, about the time we are ſpeaking of, little leſs than eight hundred thouſand pounds ſterling a year, and other nations in their proportions. COLBERT made the moſt of all theſe advantageous circumſtances, and whilſt he filled the national ſponge, he taught his ſucceſſors how to ſqueeze it; a ſecret that he repented having diſcovered, they ſay, when he ſaw the immenſe ſums that were neceſſary to ſupply the growing magnificence of his maſter.

THIS

This was the character of LEWIS the fourteenth, and this was the ſtate of his kingdom at the beginning of the preſent period. If his power was great, his pretenſions were ſtill greater. He had renounced, and the Infanta with his conſent had renounced, all right to the ſucceſſion of Spain, in the ſtrongeſt terms that the precaution of the councils of Madrid could contrive. No matter; he conſented to theſe renunciations, but your lordſhip will find by the letters of MAZARIN, and by other memorials, that he acted on the contrary principle, from the firſt, which he avowed ſoon afterwards. Such a power, and ſuch pretenſions, ſhould have given, one would think, an immediate alarm to the reſt of Europe. PHILIP the fourth was broken and decayed, like the monarchy he governed. One of his ſons died, as I remember, during the negotiations that preceded the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty: and the ſurvivor, who was CHARLES the ſecond, rather languiſhed, than lived, from the cradle to the grave. So dangerous a contingency, therefore, as the union of the two monarchies of France and Spain, being in view forty years together; one would imagine, that the principal powers of Europe had the means of preventing it conſtantly in view during the ſame time. But it was otherwiſe. France acted very ſyſtematically from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, to the death of king CHARLES the ſecond of Spain. She never loſt ſight of her great object, the ſucceſſion to the whole Spaniſh monarchy; and ſhe accepted the will of the king of SPAIN in favor of the duke of ANJOU. As ſhe never loſt ſight of her great object during this time, ſo ſhe loſt no opportunity of increaſing her power while ſhe waited for that of ſucceeding in her pretenſions. The two branches of Auſtria were in no condition of making a conſiderable oppoſition to her deſigns and attempts. Holland, who of all other powers was the moſt concerned to oppoſe them, was at that time

time under two influences that hindered her from purſuing her true intereſt. Her true intereſt was to have uſed her utmoſt endeavors to unite cloſely and intimately with England on the reſtoration of king CHARLES. She did the very contrary. JOHN DE WIT, at the head of the Louveſtein faction, governed. The intereſt of his party was to keep the houſe of Orange down: he courted therefore the friendſhip of France, and neglected that of England. The alliance between our nation and the Dutch was renewed, I think, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty two; but the latter had made a defenſive league with France a little before, on the ſuppoſition principally of a war with England. The war became inevitable very ſoon. CROMWELL had chaſtiſed them for their uſurpations in trade, and the outrages and cruelties they had committed; but he had not cured them. The ſame ſpirit continued in the Dutch, the ſame reſentments in the Engliſh: and the pique of merchants became the pique of nations. France entered into the war on the ſide of Holland; but the little aſſiſtance ſhe gave the Dutch ſhewed plainly enough that her intention was to make theſe two powers waſte their ſtrength againſt one another, whilſt ſhe extended her conqueſts in the Spaniſh Low Countries. Her invaſion in theſe provinces obliged DE WIT to change his conduct. Hitherto he had been attached to France in the cloſeſt manner, had led his republic to ſerve all the purpoſes of France, and had renewed with the marſhal D'ESTRADES a project of dividing the Spaniſh Netherlands between France and Holland, that had been taken up formerly, when RICHELIEU made uſe of it to flatter their ambition, and to engage them to prolong the war againſt Spain. A project not unlike to that which was held out to them by the famous preliminaries, and the extravagant barrier-treaty, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine; and which engaged them to continue a war on the principle of ambition,

into which they had entered with more reaſonable and more moderate views.

As the private intereſts of the two DE WITS hindered that common-wealth from being on her guard, as early as ſhe ought to have been, againſt France, ſo the miſtaken policy of the court of England, and the ſhort views, and the profuſe temper of the prince who governed, gave great advantages to LEWIS the fourteenth in the purſuit of his deſigns. He bought Dunkirk: and your lordſhip knows how great a clamor was raiſed on that occaſion againſt your noble anceſtor; as if he alone had been anſwerable for the meaſure, and his intereſt had been concerned in it. I have heard our late friend Mr. GEORGE CLARK quote a witneſs, who was quite unexceptionable, but I cannot recal his name at preſent, who, many years after all theſe tranſactions, and the death of my lord CLARENDON, affirmed, that the earl of SANDWICH had owned to him, that he himſelf gave his opinion, among many others, officers, and miniſters, for ſelling Dunkirk. Their reaſons could not be good, I preſume to ſay; but ſeveral, that might be plauſible at that time, are eaſily gueſſed. A prince like king CHARLES, who would have made as many bad bargains as any young ſpendthrift, for money, finding himſelf thus backed, we may aſſure ourſelves, was peremptorily determined to ſell: and whatever your great grand-father's opinion was, this I am able to pronounce upon my own experience, that his treaty for the ſale is no proof he was of opinion to ſell. When the reſolution of ſelling was once taken, to whom could the ſale be made? To the Dutch? No. This meaſure would have been at leaſt as impolitic, and, in that moment, perhaps more odious than the other. To the Spaniards? They were unable to buy: and, as low as their power was ſunk, the principle of oppoſing it ſtill prevailed. I have ſometimes thought that

that the Spaniards, who were forced to make peace with Portugal, and to renounce all claim to that crown, four or five years afterwards, might have been induced to take this reſolution then; if the regaining Dunkirk without any expence had been a condition propoſed to them; and that the Portugueſe, who, notwithſtanding their alliance with Eng'and and the indirect ſuccours that France afforded them, were little able, after the treaty eſpecially, to ſupport a war againſt Spain, might have been induced to pay the price of Dunkirk, for ſo great an advantage as immediate peace with Spain, and the extinction of all foreign pretences on their crown. But this ſpeculation concerning events ſo long ago paſſed is not much to the purpoſe here. I proceed therefore to obſerve, that notwithſtanding the ſale of Dunkirk, and the ſecret leanings of our court to that of France, yet England was firſt to take the alarm, when LEWIS the fourteenth invaded the Spaniſh Netherlands in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven: and the triple alliance was the work of an Engliſh miniſter. It was time to take this alarm; for from the moment that the king of FRANCE claimed a right to the county of Burgundy, the duchy of Brabant, and other portions of the Low Countries that devolved on his queen by the death of her father PHILIP the fourth, he pulled off the maſk entirely. Volumes were written to eſtabliſh, and to refute this ſuppoſed right. Your lordſhip no doubt will look into a controverſy that has employed ſo many pens and ſo many ſwords; and I believe you will think it was ſufficiently bold in the French, to argue from cuſtoms, that regulated the courſe of private ſucceſſions in certain provinces, to a right of ſucceeding to the ſovereignty of thoſe provinces: and to aſſert the diviſibility of the Spaniſh monarchy, with the ſame breath with which they aſſerted the indiviſibility of their own; altho the proofs in one caſe were juſt as good as the proofs in the other, and the funda-

mental law of indiviſibility was at leaſt as good a law in Spain, as either this or the Salique law was in France. But however proper it might be for the French and Auſtrian pens to enter into long diſcuſſions, and to appeal, on this great occaſion, to the reſt of Europe; the reſt of Europe had a ſhort objection to make to the plea of France, which no ſophiſms, no quirks of law could evade. Spain accepted the renunciations as a real ſecurity: France gave them as ſuch to Spain, and in effect to the reſt of Europe. If they had not been thus given, and thus taken, the Spaniards would not have married their Infanta to the king of France, whatever diſtreſs they might have endured by the prolongation of the war. Theſe renunciations were renunciations of all rights whatſoever to the whole Spaniſh monarchy, and to every part of it. The provinces claimed by France at this time were parts of it. To claim them, was therefore to claim the whole; for if the renunciations were no bar to the rights accruing to MARY THERESA on the death of her father PHILIP the fourth, neither could they be any to the rights that would acrue to her and her children, on the death of her brother CHARLES the ſecond: an unhealthful youth, and who at this inſtant was in immediate danger of dying; for to all the complicated diſtempers he brought into the world with him, the ſmall-pox was added. Your lordſhip ſees how the fatal contingency of uniting the two monarchies of France and Spain ſtared mankind in the face; and yet nothing, that I can remember, was done to prevent it: not ſo much as a guaranty given, or a declaration made to aſſert the validity of theſe renunciations, and for ſecuring the effect of them. The triple alliance indeed ſtoped the progreſs of the French arms, and produced the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. But England, Sweden, and Holland, the contracting powers in this alliance, ſeemed to look, and probably did look, no farther. France kept a great and important

portant part of what ſhe had ſurpriſed or raviſhed, or purchaſed; for we cannot ſay with any propriety that ſhe conquered: and the Spaniards were obliged to ſet all they ſaved to the account of gain. The German branch of Auſtria had been reduced very low in power and in credit under FERDINAND the third, by the treaties of Weſtphalia, as I have ſaid already. LEWIS the fourteenth maintained, during many years, the influence theſe treaties had given him among the princes and ſtates of the empire. The famous capitulation made at Frankfort on the election of LEOPOLD, who ſucceeded FERDINAND about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty ſeven, was encouraged by the intrigues of France: and the power of France was looked upon as the ſole power that could ratify and ſecure effectually the obſervation of the conditions then made. The league of the Rhine was not renewed I believe after the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſix; but tho this league was not renewed, yet ſome of theſe princes and ſtates continued in their old engagements with France: whilſt others took new engagements on particular occaſions, according as private and ſometimes very paultry intereſts, and the emiſſaries of France in all their little courts, diſpoſed them. In ſhort the princes of Germany ſhewed no alarm at the growing ambition and power of LEWIS the fourteenth, but contributed to encourage one, and to confirm the other. In ſuch a ſtate of things the German branch was little able to aſſiſt the Spaniſh branch againſt France, either in the war that ended by the Pyrenean treaty, or in that we are ſpeaking of here, the ſhort war that began in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, and was ended by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight. But it was not this alone that diſabled the emperor from acting with vigor in the cauſe of his family then, nor that has rendered the houſe of Auſtria a dead

weight

weight upon all her allies ever ſince. Bigotry, and its inſeparable companion, cruelty, as well as the tyranny and avarice of the court of Vienna, created in thoſe days, and has maintained in ours, almoſt a perpetual diverſion of the imperial arms from all effectual oppoſition to France. I mean to ſpeak of the troubles in Hungary. Whatever they became in their progreſs, they were cauſed originally by the uſurpations and perſecutions of the emperor: and when the Hungarians were called rebels firſt, they were called ſo for no other reaſon than this, that they would not be ſlaves. The dominion of the emperor being leſs ſupportable than that of the Turks, this unhappy people opened a door to the latter to infeſt the empire, inſtead of making their country what it had been before, a barrier againſt the Ottoman power. France became a ſure, tho ſecret ally of the Turks, as well as the Hungarians, and has found her account in it, by keeping the emperor in perpetual alarms on that ſide, while ſhe has ravaged the empire and the Low Countries on the other. Thus we ſaw, thirty two years ago, the arms of France and Bavaria in poſſeſſion of Paſſau, and the mal-contents of Hungary in the ſuburbs of Vienna. In a word, when LEWIS the fourteenth made the firſt eſſay of his power, by the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-ſeven, and founded, as it were, the councils of Europe concerning his pretentions on the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, he found his power to be great beyond what his neighbours, or even he perhaps thought it: great by the wealth, and greater by the united ſpirit of his people; greater ſtill by the ill policy, and divided intereſts that governed thoſe who had a ſuperior common intereſt to oppoſe him. He found that the members of the triple alliance did not ſee, or ſeeing did not think proper to own that they ſaw, the injuſtice, and the conſequence of his pretenſions. They contented themſelves to give to Spain an act of guaranty for ſecuring the execution

of the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. He knew even then how ill the guaranty would be obſerved by two of them at leaſt, by England and by Sweden. The treaty itſelf was nothing more than a compoſition between the bully and the bullied. Tournay, and Liſle, and Doway, and other places that I have forgot, were yielded to him: and he reſtored the county of Burgundy, according to the option that Spain made, againſt the intereſt and the expectation too of the Dutch, when an option was forced upon her. The king of SPAIN compounded for his poſſeſſion: but the emperor compounded at the ſame time for his ſucceſſion, by a private eventual treaty of partition, which the commander of GREMONVILLE and the count of AVERSBERG ſigned at Vienna. The ſame LEOPOLD, who exclaimed ſo loudly, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety eight, againſt any partition of the Spaniſh monarchy, and refuſed to ſubmit to that which England and Holland had then made, made one himſelf in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight, with ſo little regard to theſe two powers, that the whole ten provinces were thrown into the lot of France.

THERE is no room to wonder if ſuch experience as LEWIS the fourteenth had upon this occaſion, and ſuch a face of affairs in Europe, raiſing his hopes, raiſed his ambition: and, if, in making peace at Aix la Chapelle, he meditated a new war, the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two; the preparations he made for it, by negotiations in all parts, by alliances wherever he found ingreſſion, and by the increaſe of his forces, were equally proofs of ability, induſtry, and power. I ſhall not deſcend into theſe particulars: your lordſhip will find them pretty well detailed in the memorials of that time. But one of the alliances he made I muſt mention, tho I mention it with the utmoſt regret and indignation.

England

England was fatally engaged to act a part in this conſpiracy againſt the peace and the liberty of Europe, nay, againſt her own peace and her own liberty; for a bubble's part it was, equally wicked and impolitic. Forgive the terms I uſe, my lord: none can be too ſtrong. The principles of the triple alliance, juſt and wiſe, and worthy of a king of England, were laid aſide. Then, the progreſs of the French arms was to be checked, the ten provinces were to be ſaved, and by ſaving them the barrier of Holland was to be preſerved. Now, we joined our counſels and our arms to thoſe of France, in a project that could not be carried on at all, as it was eaſy to foreſee, and as the event ſhewed, unleſs it was carried on againſt Spain, the emperor, and moſt of the princes of Germany, as well as the Dutch; and which could not be carried on ſucceſsfully, without leaving the ten provinces entirely at the mercy of France, and giving her pretence and opportunity of ravaging the empire, and extending her conqueſts on the Rhine. The medal of VAN BEUNINGHEN, and other pretences that France took for attacking the ſtates of the Low Countries, were ridiculous. They impoſed on no one: and the true object of LEWIS the fourteenth was manifeſt to all. But what could a king of England mean? CHARLES the ſecond had reaſons of reſentment againſt the Dutch, and juſt ones too no doubt. Among the reſt, it was not eaſy for him to forget the affront he had ſuffered, and the loſs he had ſuſtained, when, depending on the peace that was ready to be ſigned, and that was ſigned at Breda in July, he neglected to fit out his fleet; and when that of Holland, commanded by RUYTER, with CORNELIUS DE WIT on board as deputy or commiſſioner of the ſtates, burnt his ſhips at Chatham in June. The famous perpetual edict, as it was called but did not prove in the event, againſt the election of a ſtate-holder, which JOHN DE WIT promoted, carried, and obliged

obliged the prince of Orange to ſwear to maintain a very few days after the concluſion of the peace at Breda, might be another motive in the breaſt of king CHARLES the ſecond: as it was certainly a pretence of revenge on the Dutch, or at leaſt on the DE WITS and the Louveſtein faction, that ruled almoſt deſpotically in that commonwealth. But it is plain that neither theſe reaſons, nor others of a more ancient date, determined him to this alliance with France; ſince he contracted the triple alliance within four or five months after the two events, I have mentioned, happened. What then did he mean? Did he mean to acquire one of the ſeven provinces, and divide them, as the Dutch had twice treated for the diviſion of the ten, with France? I believe not; but this I believe, that his inclinations were favorable to the popiſh intereſt in general, and that he meant to make himſelf more abſolute at home; that he thought it neceſſary to this end to humble the Dutch, to reduce their power, and perhaps to change the form of their government; to deprive his ſubjects of the correſpondence with a neighboring proteſtant and free ſtate, and of all hope of ſuccour and ſupport from thence in their oppoſition to him; in a word to abet the deſigns of France on the continent, that France might abet his deſigns on his own kingdom. This, I ſay, I believe; and this I ſhould venture to affirm, if I had in my hands to produce, and was at liberty to quote, the private relations I have red formerly, drawn up by thoſe who were no enemies to ſuch deſigns, and on the authority of thoſe who were parties to them. But whatever king CHARLES the ſecond meant, certain it is, that his conduct eſtabliſhed the ſuperiority of France in Europe.

BUT this charge, however, muſt not be confined to him alone. Thoſe who were nearer the danger, thoſe who were expoſed to the immediate attacks of France, and even thoſe

who were her rivals for the ſame ſucceſſion, having either aſſiſted her, or engaged to remain neuters, a ſtrange fatality prevailed, and produced ſuch a conjuncture as can hardly be paralleled in hiſtory. Your lordſhip will obſerve with aſtoniſhment, even in the beginning of the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, all the neighbors of France, acting as if they had nothing to fear from her, and ſome as if they had much to hope, by helping her to oppreſs the Dutch and ſharing with her the ſpoils of that commonwealth. "Delenda eſt Carthago," was the cry in England, and ſeemed too a maxim on the continent.

IN the courſe of the ſame year, you will obſerve that all theſe powers took the alarm, and began to unite in oppoſition to France. Even England thought it time to interpoſe in favor of the Dutch. The conſequences of this alarm, of this ſudden turn in the policy of Europe, and of that which happened, by the maſſacre of the DE WITS, and the elevation of the prince of ORANGE, in the government of the ſeven provinces, ſaved theſe provinces, and ſtopped the rapid progreſs of the arms of France. LEWIS the fourteenth indeed ſurpriſed the ſeven provinces in this war, as he had ſurpriſed the ten in that of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, and ravaged defenceleſs countries with armies ſufficient to conquer them, if they had been prepared to reſiſt. In the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, he had little leſs than one hundred and fifty thouſand men on foot, beſides the bodies of Engliſh, Swiſs, Italians, and Swedes, that amounted to thirty or forty thouſand more. With this mighty force he took forty places in forty days, impoſed extravagant conditions of peace, played the monarch a little while at Utrecht; and as ſoon as the Dutch recovered from their conſternation, and, animated by the example of the prince

prince of ORANGE and the hopes of ſuccour, refuſed theſe conditions, he went back to Verſailles, and left his generals to carry on his enterprize: which they did with ſo little ſucceſs, that Grave and Maeſtricht alone remained to him of all the boaſted conqueſts he had made; and even theſe he offered two years afterwards to reſtore, if by that conceſſion he could have prevailed on the Dutch at that time to make peace with him. But they were not yet diſpoſed to abandon their allies; for allies now they had. The emperor and the king of SPAIN had engaged in the quarrel againſt France, and many of the princes of the empire had done the ſame. Not all. The Bavarian continued obſtinate in his neutrality, and, to mention no more, the Swedes made a great diverſion in favor of France in the empire; where the duke of HANOVER abetted their deſigns as much as he could, for he was a zealous partiſan of France, tho the other princes of his houſe acted for the common cauſe. I deſcend into no more particulars. The war that LEWIS the fourteenth kindled by attacking in ſo violent a manner the Dutch commonwealth, and by making ſo arbitrary an uſe of his firſt ſucceſs, became general, in the Low Countries, in Spain, in Sicily, on the upper and lower Rhine, in Denmark, in Sweden, and in the provinces of Germany belonging to theſe two crowns; on the Mediterranean, the Ocean, and the Baltic. France ſupported this war with advantage on every ſide: and when your lordſhip conſiders in what manner it was carried on againſt her, you will not be ſurpriſed that ſhe did ſo. Spain had ſpirit, but too little ſtrength to maintain her power in Sicily, where Meſſina had revolted; to defend her frontier on that ſide of the Pyrenées; and to reſiſt the great efforts of the French in the Low Countries. The empire was divided; and, even among the princes who acted againſt France, there was neither union in their councils, nor concert in their projects, nor order in pre-

parations, nor vigor in execution: and, to ſay the truth, there was not, in the whole confederacy, a man whoſe abilities could make him a match for the prince of CONDE' or the marſhal of TURENNE; nor many who were in any degree equal to LUXEMBURG, CREQUI, SCHOMBERG, and other generals of inferior note, who commanded the armies of France. The emperor took this very time to make new invaſions on the liberties of Hungary, and to oppreſs his proteſtant ſubjects. The prince of ORANGE alone acted with invincible firmneſs, like a patriot, and a hero. Neither the ſeductions of France nor thoſe of England, neither the temptations of ambition nor thoſe of private intereſt, could make him ſwerve from the true intereſt of his country, nor from the common intereſt of Europe. He had raiſed more ſieges, and loſt more battles, it was ſaid, than any general of his age had done. Be it ſo. But his defeats were manifeſtly due in great meaſure to circumſtances independent on him: and that ſpirit, which even theſe defeats could not depreſs, was all his own. He had difficulties in his own commonwealth; the governors of the Spaniſh Low Countries croſſed his meaſures ſometimes; the German allies diſappointed and broke them often: and it is not improbable that he was frequently betrayed. He was ſo perhaps even by SOUCHES, the imperial general; a Frenchman according to BAYLE, and a penſioner of LOUVOIS according to common report, and very ſtrong appearances. He had not yet credit and authority ſufficient to make him a centre of union to a whole confederacy, the ſoul that animated and directed ſo great a body. He came to be ſuch afterwards; but at the time ſpoken of, he could not take ſo great a part upon him. No other prince or general was equal to it: and the conſequences of this defect appeared almoſt in every operation. France was ſurrounded by a multitude of enemies, all intent to demoliſh her power. But, like the builders of Babel,

Babel, they ſpoke different languages: and as thoſe could not build, theſe could not demoliſh, for want of underſtanding one another. France improved this advantage by her arms, and more by her negotiations. Nimeghen was, after Cologn, the ſcene of theſe. England was the mediating power, and I know not whether our CHARLES the ſecond did not ſerve her purpoſes more uſefully in the latter, and under the character of mediator, than he did or could have done by joining his arms to her's, and acting as her ally. The Dutch were induced to ſign a treaty with him, that broke the confederacy, and gave great advantage to France: for the purport of it was to oblige France and Spain to make peace on a plan to be propoſed to them, and no mention was made in it of the other allies that I remember. The Dutch were glad to get out of an expenſive war. France promiſed to reſtore Maeſtricht to them, and Maeſtricht was the only place that remained unrecovered of all they had loſt. They dropped Spain at Nimeghen, as they had dropped France at Munſter; but many circumſtances concurred to give a much worſe grace to their abandoning of Spain, than to their abandoning of France. I need not ſpecify them. This only I would obſerve: when they made a ſeparate peace at Munſter, they left an ally who was in condition to carry on the war alone with advantage, and they preſumed to impoſe no terms upon him: when they made a ſeparate peace at Nimeghen, they abandoned an ally who was in no condition to carry on the war alone, and who was reduced to accept whatever terms the common enemy preſcribed. In their great diſtreſs in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy three, they engaged to reſtore Maeſtricht to the Spaniards as ſoon as it ſhould be retaken: it was not retaken, and they accepted it for themſelves as the price of the ſeparate peace they made with France. The Dutch had engaged farther, to make neither peace nor truce with the king of FRANCE,

till

till that prince conſented to reſtore to Spain all he had conquered ſince the Pyrenean treaty. But far from keeping this promiſe in any tolerable degree, LEWIS the fourteenth acquired, by the plan impoſed on Spain at Nimeghen, beſides the county of Burgundy, ſo many other countries and towns on the ſide of the ten Spaniſh provinces, that theſe, added to the places he kept of thoſe which had been yielded to him by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle (for ſome of little conſequence he reſtored) put into his hands the principal ſtrength of that barrier, againſt which we goaded ourſelves almoſt to death in the laſt great war; and made good the ſaying of the marſhal of SCHOMBERG, that to attack this barrier was to take the beaſt by his horns. I know very well what may be ſaid to excuſe the Dutch. The emperor was more intent to tyrannize his ſubjects on one ſide, than to defend them on the other. He attempted little againſt France, and the little he did attempt was ill-ordered, and worſe executed. The aſſiſtance of the princes of Germany was often uncertain, and always expenſive. Spain was already indebted to Holland for great ſums; greater ſtill muſt be advanced to her if the war continued: and experience ſhewed that France was able, and would continue, to prevail againſt her preſent enemies. The triple league had ſtopped her progreſs, and obliged her to abandon the county of Burgundy; but Sweden was now engaged in the war on the ſide of France, as England had been in the beginning of it: and England was now privately favorable to her intereſts, as Sweden had been in the beginning of it. The whole ten provinces would have been ſubdued in the courſe of a few campaigns more: and it was better for Spain and the Dutch too, that part ſhould be ſaved by accepting a ſort of compoſition, than the whole be riſqued by refuſing it. This might be alledged to excuſe the conduct of the States General, in impoſing hard terms on Spain; in making none for

for their other allies, and in ſigning alone: by which ſteps they gave France an opportunity that ſhe improved with great dexterity of management, the opportunity of treating with the confederates one by one, and of beating them by detail in the cabinet, if I may ſo ſay, as ſhe had often done in the field. I ſhall not compare theſe reaſons, which were but too well founded in fact, and muſt appear plauſible at leaſt, with other conſiderations that might be, and were at the time, inſiſted upon. I confine myſelf to a few obſervations, which every knowing and impartial man muſt admit. Your lordſhip will obſerve, firſt, that the fatal principle of compounding with LEWIS the fourteenth, from the time that his pretenſions, his power, and the uſe he made of it, began to threaten Europe, prevailed ſtill more at Nimeghen than it had prevailed at Aix: ſo that altho he did not obtain to the full all he attempted, yet the dominions of France were by common conſent, on every treaty, more and more extended; her barriers on all ſides were more and more ſtrengthened; thoſe of her neighbours were more and more weakened; and that power, which was to aſſert one day, againſt the reſt of Europe, the pretended rights of the houſe of Bourbon to the Spaniſh monarchy, was more and more eſtabliſhed, and rendered truly formidable in ſuch hands at leaſt, during the courſe of the firſt eighteen years of the period. Your lordſhip will pleaſe to obſerve, in the ſecond place, that the extreme weakneſs of one branch of Auſtria, and the miſerable conduct of both; the poverty of ſome of the princes of the empire, and the diſunion, and to ſpeak plainly, the mercenary policy of all of them; in ſhort, the confined views, the falſe notions, and, to ſpeak as plainly of my own as of other nations, the iniquity of the councils of England, not only hindered the growth of this power from being ſtopped in time, but nurſed it up into ſtrength almoſt inſuperable by any future confederacy.

racy. A third obſervation is this: If the excuſes made for the conduct of the Dutch at Nimeghen are not ſufficient, they too muſt come in for their ſhare in this condemnation, even after the death of the DE WITS; as they were to be condemned moſt juſtly, during the adminiſtration, for abetting and favoring France. If theſe excuſes, grounded on their inability to purſue any longer a war, the principal profit of which was to accrue to their confederates, for that was the caſe after the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy three, or one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy four, and the principal burden of which was thrown on them by their confederates; if theſe are ſufficient, they ſhould not have acted, for decency's ſake as well as out of good policy, the part they did act in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven, and one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, towards the late queen, who had complaints of the ſame kind, in a much higher degree and with circumſtances much more aggravating, to make of them, of the emperor, and of all the princes of Germany; and who was far from treating them and their other allies, at that time, as they treated Spain and their other allies in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight. Immediately after the Dutch had made their peace, that of Spain was ſigned with France. The emperor's treaty with this crown and that of Sweden was concluded in the following year: and LEWIS the fourteenth being now at liberty to aſſiſt his ally, whilſt he had tied up the powers with whom he had treated from aſſiſting theirs, he ſoon forced the king of DENMARK and the elector of BRANDENBURG to reſtore all they had taken from the Swedes, and to conclude the peace of the north In all theſe treaties he gave the law, and he was now at the higheſt point of his grandeur. He continued at this point for ſeveral years, and in this heighth of his power he prepared thoſe alliances againſt it, under the weight of which he

he was at laſt well-nigh oppreſſed; and might have been reduced as low as the general intereſt of Europe required, if ſome of the cauſes, which worked now, had not continued to work in his favor, and if his enemies had not proved, in their turn of fortune, as inſatiable as proſperity had rendered him.

AFTER he had made peace with all the powers with whom he had been in war, he continued to vex both Spain and the empire, and to extend his conqueſts in the Low Countries, and on the Rhine, both by the pen and the ſword. He erected the chambers of Metz and of Briſach, where his own ſubjects were proſecutors, witneſſes, and judges all at once. Upon the deciſions of theſe tribunals, he ſeized into his own hands, under the notion of dependencies and the pretence of reunions, whatever towns or diſtricts of country tempted his ambition, or ſuited his conveniency: and added, by theſe and by other means, in the midſt of peace, more territories to thoſe the late treaties had yielded to him, than he could have got by continuing the war. He acted afterwards, in the ſupport of all this, without any bounds or limits. His glory was a reaſon for attacking Holland in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, and his conveniency a reaſon for many of the attacks he made on others afterwards. He took Luxemburg by force; he ſtole Straſburg; he bought Caſal: and, whilſt he waited the opportunity of acquiring to his family the crown of Spain, he was not without thoughts, nor hopes perhaps, of bringing into it the imperial crown likewiſe. Some of the cruelties he exerciſed in the empire may be aſcribed to his diſappointment in this view: I ſay ſome of them, becauſe in the war that ended by the treaty of Nimeghen, he had already exerciſed many. Tho the French writers endeavor to ſlide over them, to palliate them, and to impute them parti-

cularly to the Engliſh that were in their ſervice; for even this one of their writers has the front to advance: yet theſe cruelties, unheard of among civilized nations, muſt be granted to have been ordered by the counſels, and executed by the arms of France, in the Palatinate, and in other parts.

IF LEWIS the fourteenth could have contented himſelf with the acquiſitions that were confirmed to him by the treaties of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight, and one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy nine, and with the authority and reputation which he then gained; it is plain that he would have prevented the alliances that were afterwards formed againſt him, and that he might have regained his credit amongſt the princes of the empire, where he had one family-alliance by the marriage of his brother to the daughter of the elector Palatine, and another by that of his ſon to the ſiſter of the elector of BAVARIA; where Sweden was cloſely attached to him, and where the ſame principles of private intereſt would have ſoon attached others as cloſely. He might have remained not only the principal, but the directing power of Europe, and have held this rank with all the glory imaginable, till the death of the king of SPAIN, or ſome other object of great ambition, had determined him to act another part. But inſtead of this, he continued to vex and provoke all thoſe who were, unhappily for them, his neighbors, and that, in many inſtances, for trifles. An example of this kind occurs to me. On the death of the duke of DEUX PONTS, he ſeized that little inconſiderable duchy, without any regard to the indiſputable right of the king of SWEDEN, to the ſervices that crown had rendered him, or to the want he might have of that alliance hereafter. The conſequence was, that Sweden entered with the emperor, the king of SPAIN, the elector of BAVARIA, and the States General, into the alliance of guaranty,

as

as it was called, about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty three, and into the famous league of Auſburg, in one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty ſix.

SINCE I have mentioned this league, and ſince we may date from it a more general, and more concerted oppoſition to France, than there had been before; give me leave to recal ſome of the reflections that have preſented themſelves to my mind, in conſidering what I have red, and what I have heard related, concerning the paſſages of that time. They will be of uſe to form our judgment concerning later paſſages. If the king of FRANCE became an object of averſion on account of any invaſions he made, any deviations from public faith, any barbarities exerciſed where his arms prevailed, or the perſecution of his proteſtant ſubjects; the emperor deſerved to be ſuch an object, at leaſt as much as he, on the ſame accounts. The emperor was ſo too, but with this difference relatively to the political ſyſtem of the weſt: the Auſtrian ambition and bigotry exerted themſelves in diſtant countries, whoſe intereſts were not conſidered as a part of this ſyſtem; for otherwiſe there would have been as much reaſon for aſſiſting the people of Hungary and of Tranſylvania againſt the emperor, as there had been formerly for aſſiſting the people of the ſeven united provinces againſt Spain, or as there had been lately for aſſiſting them againſt France: but the ambition and bigotry of LEWIS the fourteenth were exerted in the Low Countries, on the Rhine, in Italy, and in Spain, in the very midſt of this ſyſtem, if I may ſay ſo, and with ſucceſs that could not fail to ſubvert it in time. The power of the houſe of Auſtria, that had been feared too long, was feared no longer: and that of the houſe of Bourbon, by having been feared too late, was now grown terrible. The emperor was ſo intent on the eſtabliſhment of his abſolute power in Hungary, that he ex-

poſed the empire doubly to deſolation and ruin for the ſake of it. He left the frontier almoſt quite defenceleſs on the ſide of the Rhine, againſt the inroads and ravages of France: and by ſhewing no mercy to the Hungarians, nor keeping any faith with them, he forced that miſerable people into alliances with the Turk, who invaded the empire and beſieged Vienna. Even this event had no effect upon him. Your lordſhip will find, that SOBIESKI king of Poland, who had forced the Turks to raiſe the ſiege, and had fixed the imperial crown that tottered on his head, could not prevail on him to take thoſe meaſures by which alone it was poſſible to cover the empire, to ſecure the king of SPAIN, and to reduce that power who was probably one day to diſpute with him this prince's ſucceſſion. TEKELI and the malcontents made ſuch demands as none but a tyrant could refuſe, the preſervation of their antient privileges, liberty of conſcience, the convocation of a free diet or parliament, and others of leſs importance. All was in vain. The war continued with them, and with the Turks, and France was left at liberty to puſh her enterpriſes, almoſt without oppoſition, againſt Germany and the Low Countries. The diſtreſs in both was ſo great, that the States General ſaw no other expedient for ſtopping the progreſs of the French arms, than a ceſſation of hoſtilities, or a truce of twenty years; which they negotiated, and which was accepted by the emperor and the king of SPAIN, on the terms that LEWIS the fourteenth thought fit to offer. By theſe terms he was to remain in full and quiet poſſeſſion of all he had acquired ſince the years one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight, and one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy nine; among which acquiſitions that of Luxemburg and that of Straſburg were comprehended. The conditions of this truce were ſo advantageous to France, that all her intrigues were employed to obtain a definitive treaty of

peace upon the ſame conditions. But this was neither the intereſt nor the intention of the other contracting powers. The imperial arms had been very ſucceſsful againſt the Turks. This ſucceſs, as well as the troubles that followed upon it in the Ottoman armies, and at the Porte, gave reaſonable expectation of concluding a peace on that ſide: and, this peace concluded, the emperor, and the empire, and the king of SPAIN would have been in a much better poſture to treat with France. With theſe views, that were wiſe and juſt, the league of Auſburg was made between the emperor, the kings of SPAIN and SWEDEN as princes of the empire, and the other circles and princes. This league was purely defenſive. An expreſs article declared it to be ſo: and as it had no other regard, it was not only conformable to the laws and conſtitutions of the empire, and to the practice of all nations, but even to the terms of the act of truce ſo lately concluded. This pretence therefore for breaking the truce, ſeizing the electorate of Cologn, invading the Palatinate, beſieging Philipſburg, and carrying unexpected and undeclared war into the empire could not be ſupported: nor is it poſſible to read the reaſons publiſhed by France at this time, and drawn from her fears of the imperial power, without laughter. As little pretence was there to complain, that the emperor refuſed to convert at once the truce into a definitive treaty; ſince if he had done ſo, he would have confirmed in a lump, and without any diſcuſſion, all the arbitrary decrees of thoſe chambers, or courts, that France had erected to cover her uſurpation; and would have given up almoſt a ſixth part of the provinces of the empire, that France one way or other had poſſeſſed herſelf of. The pretenſions of the ducheſs of ORLEANS on the ſucceſſion of her father, and her brother, which were diſputed by the then elector Palatine, and were to be determined by the laws and cuſtoms of the empire, afforded as little pretence

for

for beginning this war, as any of the former allegations. The excluſion of the cardinal of FURSTENBERG, who had been elected to the archbiſhopric of Cologn, was capable of being aggravated: but even in this caſe his moſt chriſtian majeſty oppoſed his judgment and his authority againſt the judgment and authority of that holy father, whoſe eldeſt ſon he was proud to be called. In ſhort, the true reaſon why LEWIS the fourteenth began that cruel war with the empire, two years after he had concluded a ceſſation of hoſtilities for twenty, was this: he reſolved to keep what he had got; and therefore he reſolved to encourage the Turks to continue the war. He did this effectually, by invading Germany at the very inſtant when the Sultan was ſuing for peace. Notwithſtanding this, the Turks were in treaty again the following year: and good policy ſhould have obliged the emperor, ſince he could not hope to carry on this war and that againſt France, at the ſame time, with vigor and effect, to conclude a peace with the leaſt dangerous enemy of the two. The deciſion of his diſputes with France could not be deferred, his deſigns againſt the Hungarians were in part accompliſhed, for his ſon was declared king, and the ſettlement of that crown in his family was made; and the reſt of theſe, as well as thoſe that he formed againſt the Turks, might be deferred. But the councils of Vienna judged differently, and inſiſted even at this critical moment on the moſt exorbitant terms; on ſome of ſuch a nature, that the Turks ſhewed more humanity and a better ſenſe of religion in refuſing, than they in aſking them. Thus the war went on in Hungary, and proved a conſtant diverſion in favor of France, during the whole courſe of that which LEWIS the fourteenth began at this time; for the treaty of Carlowitz was poſterior to that of Ryſwic. The empire, Spain, England, and Holland engaged in the war with France: and on them the emperor left the burden of it. In the ſhort war of one

one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, he was not ſo much as a party, and inſtead of aſſiſting the king of SPAIN, which, it muſt be owned, he was in no good condition of doing, he bargained for dividing that prince's ſucceſſion, as I have obſerved above. In the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two he made ſome feeble efforts. In this of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight he did ſtill leſs: and in the war which broke out at the beginning of the preſent century he did nothing, at leaſt after the firſt campaign in Italy, and after the engagements that England and Holland took by the grand alliance. In a word, from the time that an oppoſition to France became a common cauſe in Europe, the houſe of Auſtria has been a clog upon it in many inſtances, and of conſiderable aſſiſtance to it in none. The acceſſion of England to this cauſe, which was brought about by the revolution of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight, might have made amends, and more than amends, one would think, for this defect, and have thrown ſuperiority of power and of ſucceſs on the ſide of the confederates, with whom ſhe took part againſt France. This, I ſay, might be imagined, without over-rating the power of England, or undervaluing that of France; and it was imagined at that time. How it proved otherwiſe in the event; how France came triumphant out of the war that ended by the treaty of Ryſwic, and tho ſhe gave up a great deal, yet preſerved the greateſt and the beſt part of her conqueſts and acquiſitions made ſince the treaties of Weſtphalia, and the Pyrenées; how ſhe acquired, by the gift of Spain, that whole monarchy for one of her princes, tho ſhe had no reaſon to expect the leaſt part of it without a war at one time, nor the great lot of it even by a war at any time; in ſhort, how ſhe wound up advantageouſly the ambitious ſyſtem ſhe had been fifty years in weaving; how ſhe concluded a war, in which ſhe was defeated on

every

every ſide, and wholly exhauſted, with little diminution of the provinces and barriers acquired to France, and with the quiet poſſeſſion of Spain and the Indies to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon: all this, my lord, will be the ſubject of your reſearches, when you come down to the latter part of the laſt period of modern hiſtory.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

The ſame ſubject continued from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty-eight.

YOUR lordſhip will find, that the objects propoſed by the alliance of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty nine between the emperor and the States, to which England acceded, and which was the foundation of the whole confederacy then formed, were no leſs than to reſtore all things to the terms of the Weſtphalian and Pyrenean treaties, by the war; and to preſerve them in that ſtate, after the war, by a defenſive alliance and guaranty of the ſame confederate powers againſt France. The particular as well as general meaning of this engagement was plain enough: and if it had not been ſo, the ſenſe of it would have been ſufficiently determined, by that ſeparate article, in which England and Holland obliged themſelves to aſſiſt the "houſe of Auſtria, in "taking and keeping poſſeſſion of the Spaniſh monarchy, "whenever the caſe ſhould happen of the death of CHARLES "the ſecond, without lawful heirs." This engagement was double, and thereby relative to the whole political ſyſtem of Europe, alike affected by the power and pretenſions of France. Hitherto the power of France had been alone regarded, and her pretenſions ſeemed to have been forgot: or to what purpoſe ſhould they have been remembred, whilſt Europe was ſo unhappily conſtituted, that the ſtates at whoſe expence ſhe increaſed her power, and their friends and allies, thought that

they did enough upon every occaſion if they made ſome tolerable compoſition with her? They who were not in circumſtances to refuſe confirming preſent, were little likely to take effectual meaſures againſt future uſurpations. But now, as the alarm was greater than ever, by the outrages that France had committed, and the intrigues ſhe had carried on; by the little regard ſhe had ſhewn to public faith, and by the airs of authority ſhe had aſſumed twenty years together: ſo was the ſpirit againſt her raiſed to an higher pitch, and the means of reducing her power, or at leaſt of checking it, were increaſed. The princes and ſtates who had neglected or favored the growth of this power, which all of them had done in their turns, ſaw their error; ſaw the neceſſity of repairing it, and ſaw that unleſs they could check the power of France, by uniting a power ſuperior to her's, it would be impoſſible to hinder her from ſucceeding in her great deſigns on the Spaniſh ſucceſſion. The court of England had ſubmitted, not many years before, to abet her uſurpations, and the king of ENGLAND had ſtooped to be her penſioner. But the crime was not national. On the contrary, the nation had cried out loudly againſt it, even whilſt it was committing: and as ſoon as ever the abdication of king JAMES, and the elevation of the prince of ORANGE to the throne of England happened, the nation engaged with all imaginable zeal in the common cauſe of Europe, to reduce the exorbitant power of France, to prevent her future and to revenge her paſt attempts; for even a ſpirit of revenge prevailed, and the war was a war of anger as well as of intereſt.

UNHAPPILY this zeal was neither well conducted, nor well ſeconded. It was zeal without ſucceſs in the firſt of the two wars that followed the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight; and zeal without knowledge, in both of them.

I enter into no detail concerning the events of theſe two wars. This only I obſerve on the firſt of them, that the treaties of Ryſwic were far from anſwering the ends propoſed and the engagements taken by the firſt grand alliance. The power of France, with reſpect to extent of dominions and ſtrength of barrier, was not reduced to the terms of the Pyrenean treaty, no not to thoſe of the treaty of Nimeghen. Lorrain was reſtored indeed with very conſiderable reſerves, and the places taken or uſurped on the other ſide of the Rhine: but then Straſburg was yielded up abſolutely to France by the emperor, and by the empire. The conceſſions to Spain were great, but ſo were the conqueſts and the encroachments made upon her by France, ſince the treaty of Nimeghen: and ſhe got little at Ryſwic, I believe nothing more than ſhe had ſaved at Nimeghen before. All theſe conceſſions, however, as well as the acknowledgment of king WILLIAM, and others made by LEWIS the fourteenth after he had taken Ath and Barcelona, even during the courſe of the negotiations, compared with the loſſes and repeated defeats of the allies and the ill ſtate of the confederacy, ſurpriſed the generality of mankind, who had not been accuſtomed to ſo much moderation and generoſity on the part of this prince. But the pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon on the Spaniſh ſucceſſion remained the ſame. Nothing had been done to weaken them; nothing was prepared to oppoſe them: and the opening of this ſucceſſion was viſibly at hand; for CHARLES the ſecond had been in immediate danger of dying about this time. His death could not be a remote event: and all the good queen's endeavors to be got with child had proved ineffectual. The league diſſolved, all the forces of the confederates diſperſed, and many diſbanded; France continuing armed, her forces by ſea and land increaſed and held in readineſs to act on all ſides, it was plain that the confederates had failed in the firſt object of the

grand alliance, that of reducing the power of France; by ſucceeding in which alone they could have been able to keep the ſecond engagement, that of ſecuring the ſucceſſion of Spain to the houſe of Auſtria.

AFTER this peace, what remained to be done? In the whole nature of things there remained but three. To abandon all care of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion was one; to compound with France upon this ſucceſſion was another; and to prepare, like her, during the interval of peace, to make an advantageous war whenever CHARLES the ſecond ſhould die, was a third. Now the firſt of theſe was to leave Spain, and, in leaving Spain, to leave all Europe in ſome ſort at the mercy of France; ſince whatever diſpoſition the Spaniards ſhould make of their crown, they were quite unable to ſupport it againſt France; ſince the emperor could do little without his allies; and ſince Bavaria, the third pretender, could do ſtill leſs, and might find, in ſuch a caſe, his account perhaps better in treating with the Houſe of Bourbon than with that of Auſtria. More needs not be ſaid on this head; but on the other two, which I ſhall conſider together, ſeveral facts are proper to be mentioned, and ſeveral reflections neceſſary to be made.

WE might have counter-worked, no doubt, in their own methods of policy, the councils of France, who made peace to diſſolve the confederacy, and great conceſſions, with very ſuſpicious generoſity, to gain the Spaniards: we might have waited, like them, that is in arms, the death of CHARLES the ſecond, and have fortified in the mean time the diſpoſitions of the king, the court and people of Spain, againſt the pretenſions of France: we might have made the peace, which was made ſome time after that, between the emperor and the Turks, and have obliged the former at any rate to have ſecured

cured the peace of Hungary, and to have prepared, by theſe and other expedients, for the war that would inevitably break out on the death of the king of SPAIN.

BUT all ſuch meaſures were rendered impracticable, by the emperor chiefly. Experience had ſhewn, that the powers who engaged in alliance with him muſt expect to take the whole burden of his cauſe upon themſelves; and that Hungary would maintain a perpetual diverſion in favor of France, ſince he could not reſolve to lighten the tyrannical yoke he had eſtabliſhed in that country and in Tranſilvania, nor his miniſters to part with the immenſe confiſcations they had appropriated to themſelves. Paſt experience ſhewed this: and the experience that followed confirmed it very fatally. But further; there was not only little aſſiſtance to be expected from him by thoſe who ſhould engage in his quarrel: he did them hurt of another kind, and deprived them of many advantages by falſe meaſures of policy and unſkilful negotiations. Whilſt the death of CHARLES the ſecond was expected almoſt daily, the court of Vienna ſeemed to have forgot the court of Madrid, and all the pretenſions on that crown. When the count D'HARRACH was ſent thither, the imperial councils did ſomething worſe. The king of SPAIN was ready to declare the archduke CHARLES his ſucceſſor; he was deſirous to have this young prince ſent into Spain: the bent of the people was in favor of Auſtria, or it had been ſo, and might have been eaſily turned the ſame way again: at court no cabal was yet formed in favor of Bourbon, and a very weak intrigue was on foot in favor of the electoral prince of BAVARIA. Not only CHARLES might have been on the ſpot ready to reap the ſucceſſion, but a German army might have been there to defend it; for the court of Madrid inſiſted on having twelve thouſand of theſe troops, and, rather than not have them, offered

to

to contribute to the payment of them privately: becauſe it would have been too impopular among the Spaniards, and too prejudicial to the Auſtrian intereſt, to have had it known that the emperor declined the payment of a body of his own troops that were demanded to ſecure that monarchy to his ſon. Theſe propoſals were half refuſed, and half evaded: and in return to the offer of the crown of Spain to the archduke, the imperial councils aſked the government of Milan for him. They thought it a point of deep policy to ſecure the Italian provinces, and to leave to England and Holland the care of the Low Countries, of Spain, and the Indies. By declining theſe propoſals the houſe of Auſtria renounced in ſome ſort the whole ſucceſſion: at leaſt ſhe gave England and Holland reaſons, whatever engagements theſe powers had taken, to refuſe the harder taſk of putting her into poſſeſſion by force; when ſhe might and would not, procure to the Engliſh and Dutch, and her other allies, the eaſier taſk of defending her in this poſſeſſion.

I SAID that the meaſures mentioned above were rendered impracticable, by the emperor chiefly, becauſe they were rendered ſo likewiſe by other circumſtances at the ſame conjuncture. A principal one I ſhall mention, and it ſhall be drawn from the ſtate of our own country, and the diſpoſition of our people. Let us take this up from king WILLIAM's acceſſion to our crown. During the whole progreſs that LEWIS the fourteenth made towards ſuch exorbitant power, as gave him well-grounded hopes of acquiring at laſt to his family the Spaniſh monarchy, England had been either an idle ſpectator of all that paſſed on the continent, or a faint and uncertain ally againſt France, or a warm and ſure ally on her ſide, or a partial mediator between her and the powers confederated in their common defence. The revolution produced as great a change

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in our foreign conduct, as in our domeſtic eſtabliſhment: and our nation engaged with great ſpirit in the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight. But then this ſpirit was raſh, preſumptuous, and ignorant, ill conducted at home, and ill ſeconded abroad: all which has been touched already. We had waged no long wars on the continent, nor been very deeply concerned in foreign confederacies, ſince the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The hiſtory of EDWARD the third, however, and of the firſt twelve or fifteen years of HENRY the ſixth might have taught us ſome general but uſeful leſſons, drawn from remote times, but applicable to the preſent. So might the example of HENRY the eighth, who ſquandered away great ſums for the profit of taking a town, or the honor of having an emperor in his pay; and who divided afterwards by treaty the kingdom of France between himſelf and CHARLES the fifth, with ſucceſs ſo little anſwerable to ſuch an undertaking, that it is hard to believe his Imperial and Engliſh majeſty were both in earneſt. If they were ſo, they were both the bubbles of their preſumption. But it ſeems more likely that HENRY the eighth was bubbled on this occaſion by the great hopes that CHARLES held out to flatter his vanity: as he had been bubbled by his father-in-law FERDINAND, at the beginning of his reign, in the war of Navarre. But theſe reflections were not made, nor had we enough conſidered the example of ELIZABETH, the laſt of our princes who had made any conſiderable figure abroad, and from whom we might have learned to act with vigor, but to engage with caution, and always to proportion our aſſiſtance according to our abilities, and the real neceſſities of our allies. The frontiers of France were now ſo fortified, her commerce and her naval force were ſo increaſed, her armies were grown ſo numerous, her troops were ſo diſciplined, ſo inured to war, and ſo animated by a long courſe of ſucceſsful campaigns, that they who looked

looked on the ſituation of Europe could not fail to ſee how difficult the enterpriſe of reducing her power was become. Difficult as it was, we were obliged, on every account and by reaſons of all kinds, to engage in it: but then we ſhould have engaged with more forecaſt, and have conducted ourſelves in the management of it, not with leſs alacrity and ſpirit, but with more order, more oeconomy, and a better application of our efforts. But they who governed were glad to engage us at any rate; and we entered on this great ſcheme of action, as our nation is too apt to do, hurried on by the ruling paſſion of the day. I have been told by ſeveral, who were on the ſtage of the world at this time, that the generality of our people believed, and were encouraged to believe, the war could not be long, if the king was vigorouſly ſupported: and there is a humdrum ſpeech of a ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, I think, who humbly deſired his majeſty to take this opportunity of reconquering his ancient duchy of Aquitain. We were ſoon awakened from theſe gaudy dreams. In ſeven or eight years no impreſſion had been made on France, that was beſieged as it were on every ſide: and after repeated defeats in the Low Countries, where king WILLIAM laid the principal ſtreſs of the war, his ſole triumph was the retaking Namur, that had been taken by the French a few years before. Unſuſtained by ſucceſs abroad, we are not to wonder that the ſpirit flagged at home; nor that the diſcontents of thoſe who were averſe to the eſtabliſhed government, uniting with the far greater number of thoſe who diſliked the adminiſtration, inflamed the general diſcontents of the nation, oppreſſed with taxes, pillaged by uſurers, plundered at ſea, and diſappointed at land. As we run into extremes always, ſome would have continued this war at any rate, even at the ſame rate, but it was not poſſible they ſhould prevail in ſuch a ſituation of affairs, and ſuch a diſpoſition of minds. They

who got by the war, and made immenſe fortunes by the neceſſities of the public, were not ſo numerous nor ſo powerful, as they have been ſince. The moneyed intereſt was not yet a rival able to cope with the landed intereſt, either in the nation or in parliament. The great corporations that had been erected more to ſerve the turn of party, than for any real national uſe, aimed indeed even then at the ſtrength and influence which they have ſince acquired in the legiſlature; but they had not made the ſame progreſs by promoting national corruption, as they and the court have made ſince. In ſhort, the other extreme prevailed. The generality of people grew as fond of getting out of the war, as they had been of entering into it: and thus far perhaps, conſidering how it had been conducted, they were not much to be blamed. But this was not all; for when king WILLIAM had made the peace, our martial ſpirit became at once ſo pacific, that we ſeemed reſolved to meddle no more in the affairs of the continent, at leaſt to employ our arms no more in the quarrels that might ariſe there: and accordingly we reduced our troops in England to ſeven thouſand men.

I HAVE ſometimes conſidered, in reflecting on theſe paſſages, what I ſhould have done, if I had ſat in parliament at that time; and have been forced to own myſelf, that I ſhould have voted for diſbanding the army then; as I voted in the following parliament for cenſuring the partition treaties. I am forced to own this, becauſe I remember how imperfect my notions were of the ſituation of Europe in that extraordinary criſis, and how much I ſaw the true intereſt of my own country in an half light. But, my lord, I own it with ſome ſhame; becauſe in truth nothing could be more abſurd than the conduct we held. What! becauſe we had not reduced the power of France by the war, nor excluded the houſe of Bourbon from

the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, nor compounded with her upon it by the peace; and becauſe the houſe of Auſtria had not helped herſelf, nor put it into our power to help her with more advantage and better proſpect of ſucceſs----were we to leave that whole ſucceſſion open to the invaſions of France, and to ſuffer even the contingency to ſubſiſt, of ſeeing thoſe monarchies united? What! becauſe it was become extravagant, after the trials ſo lately made, to think ourſelves any longer engaged by treaty, or obliged by good policy, to put the houſe of Auſtria in poſſeſſion of the whole Spaniſh monarchy, and to defend her in this poſſeſſion by force of arms, were we to leave the whole at the mercy of France? If we were not to do ſo, if we were not to do one of the three things that I ſaid above remained to be done, and if the emperor put it out of our power to do another of them with advantage; were we to put it ſtill more out of our power, and to wait unarmed for the death of the king of SPAIN? In fine, if we had not the proſpect of diſputing with France, ſo ſucceſsfully as we might have had it, the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, whenever it ſhould be open; were we not only to ſhew by diſarming, that we would not diſpute it all, but to cenſure likewiſe the ſecond of the three things mentioned above, and which king WILLIAM put in practice, the compounding with France, to prevent if poſſible a war, in which we were averſe to engage?

ALLOW me to puſh theſe reflections a little further, and to obſerve to your lordſhip, that if the propoſal of ſending the archduke into Spain had been accepted in time by the imperial court, and taken effect and become a meaſure of the confederacy, that war indeed would have been protracted; but France could not have hindered the paſſage of this prince and his German forces: and our fleet would have been better employed in eſcorting them, and in covering the coaſts of Spain and

and of the dominions of that crown both in Europe and in America, than it was in ſo many unmeaning expeditions from the battle of La Hogue to the end of the war. France indeed would have made her utmoſt efforts to have had ſatisfaction on her pretenſions, as ill founded as they were. She would have ended that war, as we began the next, when we demanded a reaſonable ſatisfaction for the emperor: and tho I think that the allies would have had in very many reſpects, more advantage in defending Spain, than in attacking France; yet, upon a ſuppoſition that the defence would have been as ill conducted as the attack was, and that by conſequence, whether CHARLES the ſecond had lived to the concluſion of this war, or had died before it, the war muſt have ended in ſome partition or other; this partition would have been made by the Spaniards themſelves. They had been forced to compound with France on her former pretenſions, and they muſt and they would have compounded on theſe, with an Auſtrian prince on the throne, juſt as they compounded, and probably much better than they compounded, on the pretenſions we ſupported againſt them, when they had a prince of Bourbon on their throne. France could not have diſtreſſed the Spaniards, nor have over-run their monarchy, if they had been united; and they would have been united in this caſe, and ſupported by the whole confederacy: as we diſtreſſed both France and them, over-run their monarchy in one hemiſphere, and might have done ſo in both, when they were diſunited, and ſupported by France alone. France would not have acted, in ſuch negotiations, the ridiculous part which the emperor acted in thoſe that led to the peace of Utrecht, nor have made her bargain worſe by neglecting to make it in time. But the war ending as it did, tho I cannot ſee how king WILLIAM could avoid leaving the crown of Spain and that entire monarchy at the diſcretion of LEWIS the fourteenth, otherwiſe than by

compounding to prevent a new war he was in no ſort prepared to make; yet it is undeniable, that by conſenting to a partition of their monarchy, he threw the Spaniards into the arms of France. The firſt partition might have taken place, perhaps, if the electoral prince of BAVARIA had lived, whom the French and Spaniards too would have ſeen much more willingly than the archduke on the throne of Spain. For among all the parties into which that court was divided in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety eight, when this treaty was made, that of Auſtria was grown the weakeſt, by the diſguſt taken at a German queen, and at the rapacity and inſolence of her favorites. The French were looked upon with eſteem and kindneſs at Madrid; but the Germans were become, or growing to be, objects of contempt to the miniſters, and of averſion to the people. The electoral prince died in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety nine. The ſtar of Auſtria, ſo fatal to all thoſe who were obſtacles to the ambition of that houſe, prevailed; as the elector expreſſed himſelf in the firſt pangs of his grief. The ſtate of things changed very much by this death. The archduke was to have Spain and the Indies, according to a ſecond partition: and the Spaniards, who had expreſſed great reſentment at the firſt, were puſhed beyond their bearing by this. They ſoon appeared to be ſo; for the ſecond treaty of partition was ſigned in March one thouſand ſeven hundred; and the will was made, to the beſt of my remembrance, in the October following. I ſhall not enter here into many particulars concerning theſe great events. They will be related faithfully, and I hope fully explained, in a work which your lordſhip may take the trouble very probably of peruſing ſome time or other, and which I ſhall rather leave, than give to the public. Something however muſt be ſaid more, to continue and wind up this ſummary of the latter period of modern hiſtory.

FRANCE

FRANCE then ſaw her advantage, and improved it no doubt, tho not in the manner, nor with the circumſtances, that ſome lying ſcriblers of memorials and anecdotes have advanced. She had ſent one of the ableſt men of her court to that of Madrid, the marſhal of HARCOURT, and ſhe had ſtipulated in the ſecond treaty of partition, that the archduke ſhould go neither into Spain nor the duchy of Milan, during the life of CHARLES the ſecond. She was willing to have her option between a treaty and a will. By the acceptation of the will, all king WILLIAM's meaſures were broke. He was unprepared for war as much as when he made theſe treaties to prevent one; and if he meant in making them, what ſome wiſe, but refining men have ſuſpected, and what I confeſs I ſee no reaſon to believe, only to gain time by the difficulty of executing them, and to prepare for making war, whenever the death of the king of SPAIN ſhould alarm mankind, and rouze his own ſubjects out of their inactivity and neglect of foreign intereſts: if ſo, he was diſappointed in that too; for France took poſſeſſion of the whole monarchy at once, and with univerſal concurrence, at leaſt without oppoſition or difficulty, in favor of the duke of ANJOU. By what has been obſerved, or hinted rather very ſhortly, and I fear a little confuſedly, it is plain that reducing the power of France, and ſecuring the whole Spaniſh ſucceſſion to the houſe of Auſtria, were two points that king WILLIAM, at the head of the Britiſh and Dutch commonwealths and of the greateſt confederacy Europe had ſeen, was obliged to give up. All the acquiſitions that France cared to keep for the maintenance of her power were confirmed to her by the treaty of Ryſwic: and king WILLIAM allowed, indirectly at leaſt, the pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon to the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, as LEWIS the fourteenth allowed, in the ſame manner, thoſe of the houſe of Auſtria, by the treaties of partition. Strange ſituation! in which no

expedient remained to prepare for an event, viſibly ſo near, and of ſuch vaſt importance as the death of the king of SPAIN, but a partition of his monarchy, without his conſent, or his knowledge! If king WILLIAM had not made this partition, the emperor would have made one, and with as little regard to trade, to the barrier of the ſeven provinces, or to the general ſyſtem of Europe, as had been ſhewed by him when he made the private treaty with France already mentioned, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight. The miniſters of Vienna were not wanting to inſinuate to thoſe of France overtures of a ſeparate treaty, as more conducive to their common intereſts than the acceſſion of his imperial majeſty to that of partition. But the councils of Verſailles judged very reaſonably, that a partition made with England and Holland would be more effectual than any other, if a partition was to take place: and that ſuch a partition would be juſt as effectual as one made with the emperor, to furniſh arguments to the emiſſaries of France, and motives to the Spaniſh councils, if a will in favor of France could be obtained. I repeat it again; I cannot ſee what king WILLIAM could do in ſuch circumſtances as he found himſelf in after thirty years ſtruggle, except what he did: neither can I ſee how he could do what he did, eſpecially after the reſentment expreſſed by the Spaniards, and the furious memorial preſented by CANALES on the concluſion of the firſt treaty of partition, without apprehending that the conſequence would be a will in favor of France He was in the worſt of all political circumſtances, in that wherein no one good meaſure remains to be taken; and out of which he left the two nations, at the head of whom he had been ſo long, to fight and negotiate themſelves and their confederates, as well as they could.

WHEN

WHEN this will was made and accepted, LEWIS the fourteenth had ſucceeded, and the powers in oppoſition to him had failed, in all the great objects of intereſt and ambition, which they had kept in ſight for more than forty years; that is, from the beginning of the preſent period. The actors changed their parts in the tragedy that followed. The power, that had ſo long and ſo cruelly attacked, was now to defend, the Spaniſh monarchy: and the powers, that had ſo long defended, were now to attack it. Let us ſee how this was brought about: and that we may ſee it the better, and make a better judgment of all that paſſed from the death of CHARLES the ſecond to the peace of Utrecht, let us go back to the time of his death, and conſider the circumſtances that formed this complicated ſtate of affairs, in three views; a view of right, a view of policy, and a view of power.

THE right of ſucceeding to the crown of Spain would have been undoubtedly in the children of MARIA THERESA, that is, in the houſe of Bourbon; if this right had not been barred by the ſolemn renunciations ſo often mentioned. The pretenſions of the houſe of Auſtria were founded on theſe renunciations, on the ratification of them by the Pyrenean treaty, and the confirmation of them by the will of PHILIP the fourth. The pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon were founded on a ſuppoſition, it was indeed no more, and a vain one too, that theſe renunciations were in their nature null. On this foot the diſpute of right ſtood during the life of CHARLES the ſecond, and on the ſame it would have continued to ſtand even after his death, if the renunciations had remained unſhaken; if his will, like that of his father, had confirmed them, and had left the crown, in purſuance of them, to the houſe of Auſtria. But the will of CHARLES the ſecond, annulling theſe renunciations, took away the ſole foun-

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dation of the Auſtrian pretenſions; for, however this act might be obtained, it was juſt as valid as his father's, and was confirmed by the univerſal concurrence of the Spaniſh nation to the new ſettlement he made of that crown. Let it be, as I think it ought to be, granted, that the true heirs could not claim againſt renunciations that were, if I may ſay ſo, conditions of their birth: but CHARLES the ſecond had certainly as good a right to change the courſe of ſucceſſion agreeably to the order of nature and the conſtitution of that monarchy, after his true heirs were born, as PHILIP the fourth had to change it, contrary to this order and this conſtitution, before they were born, or at any other time. He had as good a right, in ſhort, to diſpenſe with the Pyrenean treaty, and to ſet it aſide in this reſpect, as his father had to make it: ſo that the renunciations being annulled by that party to the Pyrenean treaty who had exacted them, they could be deemed no longer binding, by virtue of this treaty, on the party who had made them. The ſole queſtion that remained therefore between theſe rival houſes, as to right, was this, whether the engagements taken by LEWIS the fourteenth in the partition treaties obliged him to adhere to the terms of the laſt of them in all events, and to deprive his family of the ſucceſſion which the king of SPAIN opened, and the Spaniſh nation offered to them; rather than to depart from a compoſition he had made, on pretenſions that were diſputable then, but were now out of diſpute? It may be ſaid, and it was ſaid, that the treaties of partition being abſolute, without any condition or exception relative to any diſpoſition the king of SPAIN had made or might make of his ſucceſſion, in favor of Bourbon or Auſtria; the diſpoſition made by his will, in favor of the duke of ANJOU, could not affect the engagements ſo lately taken by LEWIS the fourteenth in theſe treaties, nor diſpenſe with a literal obſervation of them. This might be true, on

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ſtrict principles of juſtice; but I apprehend that none of theſe powers, who exclaimed ſo loudly againſt the perfidy of France in this caſe, would have been more ſcrupulous in a parallel caſe. The maxim 'ſummum jus eſt ſumma injuria' would have been quoted, and the rigid letter of treaties would have been ſoftened by an equitable interpretation of their ſpirit and intention. His imperial majeſty, above all, had not the leaſt color of right to exclaim againſt France on this occaſion; for in general, if his family was to be ſtripped of all the dominions they have acquired by breach of faith, and means much worſe than the acceptation of the will, even allowing all the invidious circumſtances imputed to the conduct of France to be true, the Auſtrian family would ſink from their preſent grandeur to that low ſtate they were in two or three centuries ago. In particular, the emperor, who had conſtantly refuſed to accede to the treaties of partition, or to ſubmit to the diſpoſitions made by them, had not the leaſt plauſible pretence to object to LEWIS the fourteenth, that he departed from them. Thus, I think, the right of the two houſes ſtood on the death of CHARLES the ſecond. The right of the Spaniards, an independant nation, to regulate their own ſucceſſion, or to receive the prince whom their dying monarch had called to it; and the right of England and Holland to regulate this ſucceſſion, to divide, and parcel out this monarchy in different lots, it would be equally fooliſh to go about to eſtabliſh. One is too evident, the other too abſurd, to admit of any proof. But enough has been ſaid concerning right, which was in truth little regarded by any of the parties concerned immediately or remotely in the whole courſe of theſe proceedings. Particular intereſts were alone regarded, and theſe were purſued as ambition, fear, reſentment, and vanity directed: I mean the ambition of the two houſes contending for ſuperiority of power: the fear of England and Holland leſt this

ſuperiority ſhould become too great in either; the reſentment of Spain at the diſmemberment of that monarchy projected by the partition-treaties; and the vanity of that nation, as well as of the princes of the houſe of Bourbon: for as vanity mingled with reſentment to make the will, vanity had a great ſhare in determining the acceptation of it.

LET us now conſider the ſame conjuncture in a view of policy. The policy of the Spaniſh councils was this. They could not brook that their monarchy ſhould be divided: and this principle is expreſſed ſtrongly in the will of CHARLES the ſecond, where he exhorts his ſubjects not to ſuffer any diſmemberment or diminution of a monarchy founded by his predeceſſors with ſo much glory. Too weak to hinder this diſmemberment by their own ſtrength, too well appriſed of the little force and little views of the court of Vienna, and their old allies having engaged to procure this diſmemberment even by force of arms; nothing remained for them to do, upon this principle, but to detach France from the engagements of the partition treaties, by giving their whole monarchy to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon. As much as may have been ſaid concerning the negotiations of France to obtain a will in her favor, and yet to keep in reſerve the advantages ſtipulated for her by the partition-treaties if ſuch a will could not be obtained, and tho I am perſuaded that the marſhal of HARCOURT, who helped to procure this will, made his court to LEWIS the fourteenth as much as the marſhal of TALLARD, who negotiated the partitions; yet it is certain, that the acceptation of the will was not a meaſure definitely taken at Verſailles when the king of SPAIN died. The alternative divided thoſe councils, and, without entering at this time into the arguments urged on each ſide, adhering to the partitions

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ſeemed the cauſe of France, accepting the will that of the houſe of Bourbon.

IT has been ſaid by men of great weight in the councils of Spain, and was ſaid at that time by men as little fond of the houſe of Bourbon, or of the French nation, as their fathers had been; that if England and Holland had not formed a confederacy and begun a war, they would have made PHILIP the fifth as good a Spaniard as any of the preceding PHILIPS, and not have endured the influence of French councils in the adminiſtration of their government: but that we threw them intirely into the hands of France when we began the war, becauſe the fleets and armies of this crown being neceſſary to their defence, they could not avoid ſubmitting to this influence as long as the ſame neceſſity continued; and, in fact, we have ſeen that the influence laſted no longer. But notwithſtanding this, it muſt be confeſſed, that a war was unavoidable. The immediate ſecuring of commerce and of barriers, the preventing an union of the two monarchies in ſome future time, and the preſervation of a certain degree at leaſt of equality in the ſcales of power, were points too important to England, Holland, and the reſt of Europe, to be reſted on the moderation of French, and the vigor of Spaniſh councils, under a prince of the houſe of France. If ſatisfaction to the houſe of Auſtria, to whoſe rights England and Holland ſhewed no great regard whilſt they were better founded than they were ſince the will, had been alone concerned; a drop of blood ſpilt, or five ſhillings ſpent in the quarrel, would have been too much profuſion. But this was properly the ſcale into which it became the common intereſt to throw all the weight that could be taken out of that of Bourbon. And therefore your lordſhip will find, that when negotiations with D'AVAUX were ſet on foot in Holland to

prevent a war, or rather on our part to gain time to prepare for it, in which view the Dutch and we had both acknowledged PHILIP king of Spain; the great article we inſiſted on was, that reaſonable ſatisfaction ſhould be given the emperor, upon his pretenſions founded on the treaty of partition. We could do no otherwiſe; and France who offered to make the treaty of Ryſwic the foundation of that treaty, could do no otherwiſe than refuſe to conſent that the treaty of partition ſhould be ſo, after accepting the will, and thereby engaging to oppoſe all partition or diſmemberment of the Spaniſh monarchy. I ſhould mention none of the other demands of England and Holland, if I could neglect to point out to your lordſhip's obſervation, that the ſame artifice was employed at this time, to perplex the more a negotiation that could not ſucceed on other accounts, as we ſaw employed in the courſe of the war, by the Engliſh and Dutch miniſters, to prevent the ſucceſs of negotiations that might, and ought to have ſucceeded. The demand I mean is that of "a liberty not "only to explain the terms propoſed, but to increaſe or am-"plify them, in the courſe of the negotiation." I do not remember the words, but this is the ſenſe, and this was the meaning of the confederates in both caſes.

IN the former, king WILLIAM was determined to begin the war by all the rules of good policy; ſince he could not obtain, nay ſince France could not grant in that conjuncture, nor without being forced to it by a war, what he was obliged by theſe very rules to demand. He intended therefore nothing by this negotiation, if it may be called ſuch, but to preſerve forms and appearances, and perhaps, which many have ſuſpected, to have time to prepare, as I hinted juſt now, both abroad and at home. Many things concurred to favor his preparations abroad. The alarm, that had been given by the acceptation

acceptation of the will, was increaſed by every ſtep that France made to ſecure the effect of it. Thus, for inſtance, the ſurpriſing and ſeizing the Dutch troops, in the ſame night, and at the ſame hour, that were diſperſed in the garriſons of the Spaniſh Netherlands, was not excuſed by the neceſſity of ſecuring thoſe places to the obedience of PHILIP, nor ſoftened by the immediate diſmiſſion of thoſe troops. The impreſſion it made was much the ſame as thoſe of the ſurpriſes and ſeizures of France in former uſurpations. No one knew then, that the ſovereignty of the ten provinces was to be yielded up to the elector of BAVARIA: and every one ſaw that there remained no longer any barrier between France and the ſeven provinces. At home, the diſpoſition of the nation was abſolutely turned to a war with France, on the death of king JAMES the ſecond, by the acknowledgment LEWIS the fourteenth made of his ſon as king of England. I know what has been ſaid in excuſe for this meaſure, taken, as I believe, on female importunity; but certainly without any regard to public faith, to the true intereſt of France in thoſe circumſtances, or to the true intereſt of the prince thus acknowledged, in any. It was ſaid, that the treaty of Ryſwic obliging his moſt chriſtian majeſty only not to diſturb king WILLIAM in his poſſeſſion, he might, without any violation of it, have acknowledged this prince as king of England; according to the political caſuiſtry of the French, and the example of France, who finds no fault with the powers that treat with the kings of England, altho the kings of England retain the title of kings of France; as well as the example of Spain, who makes no complaints that other ſtates treat with the kings of France, altho the kings of France retain the title of Navarre. But beſides that the examples are not appoſite, becauſe no other powers acknowledge in form the king of England to be king of France, nor the king of France to be king of Navarre; with

with what face could the French excuſe this meaſure? Could they excuſe it by urging that they adhered to the ſtrict letter of one article of the treaty of Ryſwic, againſt the plain meaning of that very article, and againſt the whole tenor of that treaty; in the ſame breath with which they juſtified the acceptation of the will, by pretending they adhered to the ſuppoſed ſpirit and general intention of the treaties of partition, in contradiction to the letter, to the ſpecific engagements, and to the whole purport of thoſe treaties? This part of the conduct of LEWIS the fourteenth may appear juſtly the more ſurpriſing, becauſe in moſt other parts of his conduct at the ſame time, and in ſome to his diſadvantage, he acted cautiouſly, endeavored to calm the minds of his neighbors, to reconcile Europe to his grandſon's elevation, and to avoid all ſhew of beginning hoſtilities.

THO king WILLIAM was determined to engage in a war with France and Spain, yet the ſame good policy, that determined him to engage, determined him not to engage too deeply. The engagement taken in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one is, "To procure an equita-
"ble and reaſonable ſatisfaction to his imperial majeſty for his
"pretenſion to the Spaniſh ſucceſſion; and ſufficient ſecurity
"to the king of ENGLAND, and the States General, for their
"dominions, and for the navigation and commerce of their
"ſubjects, and to prevent the union of the two monarchies of
"France and Spain." As king of England, as ſtateholder of Holland, he neither could, nor did engage any further. It may be diſputed perhaps among ſpeculative politicians, whether the balance of power in Europe would have been better preſerved by that ſcheme of partition, which the treaties, and particularly the laſt of them, propoſed, or by that which the grand alliance propoſed to be the object of the war? I think there

there is little room for ſuch a diſpute, as I ſhall have occaſion to ſay hereafter more expreſly. In this place I ſhall only ſay, that the object of this war, which king WILLIAM meditated, and queen ANNE waged, was a partition, by which a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, already acknowledged by us and the Dutch as king of Spain, was to be left on the throne of that diſmembered monarchy. The wiſdom of thoſe councils ſaw that the peace of Europe might be reſtored and ſecured on this foot, and that the liberties of Europe would be in no danger.

THE ſcales of the balance of power will never be exactly poized, nor in the preciſe point of equality either diſcernible or neceſſary to be diſcerned. It is ſufficient in this, as in other human affairs, that the deviation be not too great. Some there will always be. A conſtant attention to theſe deviations is therefore neceſſary. When they are little, their increaſe may be eaſily prevented by early care and the precautions that good policy ſuggeſts. But when they become great for want of this care and theſe precautions, or by the force of unforeſeen events, more vigor is to be exerted, and greater efforts to be made. But even in ſuch caſes, much reflection is neceſſary on all the circumſtances that form the conjuncture; leſt, by attacking with ill ſucceſs, the deviation be confirmed, and the power that is deemed already exorbitant become more ſo; and leſt, by attacking with good ſucceſs, whilſt one ſcale is pillaged, too much weight of power be thrown into the other. In ſuch caſes, he who has conſidered, in the hiſtories of former ages, the ſtrange revolutions that time produces, and the perpetual flux and reflux of public as well as private fortunes, of kingdoms and ſtates as well as of thoſe who govern or are governed in them, will incline to think, that if the ſcales can be brought back by a war, nearly, tho not exactly,

actly, to the point they were at before this great deviation from it, the reſt may be left to accidents, and to the uſe that good policy is able to make of them.

WHEN CHARLES the fifth was at the heighth of his power, and in the zenith of his glory, when a king of France and a pope were at once his priſoners; it muſt be allowed, that, his ſituation and that of his neighbors compared, they had as much at leaſt to fear from him and from the houſe of Auſtria, as the neighbors of LEWIS the fourteenth had to fear from him and from the houſe of Bourbon, when, after all his other ſucceſs, one of his grandchildren was placed on the Spaniſh throne. And yet among all the conditions of the ſeveral leagues againſt CHARLES the fifth, I do not remember that it was ever ſtipulated, that "no peace ſhould be made with him as long as "he continued to be emperor and king of Spain; nor as long "as any Auſtrian prince continued capable of uniting on his "head the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns."

IF your lordſhip makes the application, you will find that the difference of ſome circumſtances does not hinder this example from being very appoſite, and ſtrong to the preſent purpoſe. CHARLES the fifth was emperor and king of Spain; but neither was LEWIS the fourteenth king of Spain, nor PHILIP the fifth king of France. That had happened in one inſtance, which it was apprehended might happen in the other. It had happened, and it was reaſonably to be apprehended that it might happen again, and that the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns might continue, not only in the ſame family, but on the ſame heads; for meaſures were taken to ſecure the ſucceſſion of both to PHILIP the ſon of CHARLES. We do not find however that any confederacy was formed, any engagement taken, nor any war made, to remove

or

or prevent this great evil. The princes and ſtates of Europe contented themſelves to oppoſe the deſigns of CHARLES the fifth, and to check the growth of his power occaſionally, and as intereſt invited, or neceſſity forced them to do; not conſtantly. They did perhaps too little againſt him, and ſometimes too much for him: but if they did too little of one kind, time and accident did the reſt. Diſtinct dominions, and different pretenſions, created contrary intereſts in the houſe of Auſtria: and on the abdication of CHARLES the fifth, his brother ſucceeded, not his ſon, to the empire. The houſe of Auſtria divided into a German and a Spaniſh branch: and if the two branches came to have a mutual influence on one another, and frequently a common intereſt, it was not till one of them had fallen from grandeur, and till the other was rather aiming at it, than in poſſeſſion of it. In ſhort, PHILIP was excluded from the imperial throne by ſo natural a progreſſion of cauſes and effects, ariſing not only in Germany but in his own family, that if a treaty had been made to exclude him from it in favor of FERDINAND, ſuch a treaty might have been ſaid very probably to have executed itſelf.

THE precaution I have mentioned, and that was neglected in this caſe without any detriment to the common cauſe of Europe, was not neglected in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one. For in that, one of the ends propoſed by the war is, to obtain an effectual ſecurity againſt the contingent union of the crowns of France and Spain. The will of CHARLES the ſecond provides againſt the ſame contingency: and this great principle, of preventing too much dominion and power from falling to the lot of either of the families of Bourbon or Auſtria, ſeemed to be agreed on all ſides; ſince in the partition-treaty the ſame precaution was taken againſt an union of the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns.

King WILLIAM was enough piqued againſt France. His ancient prejudices were ſtrong and well founded. He had been worſted in war, over-reached in negotiation, and perſonally affronted by her. England and Holland were ſufficiently alarmed and animated, and a party was not wanting, even in our iſland, ready to approve any engagements he would have taken againſt France and Spain, and in favor of the houſe of Auſtria; tho we were leſs concerned, by any national intereſt, than any other power that took part in the war, either then, or afterwards. But this prince was far from taking a part beyond that which the particular intereſt of England and Holland, and the general intereſt of Europe, neceſſarily required. Pique muſt have no more a place than affection, in deliberations of this kind. To have engaged to dethrone PHILIP, out of reſentment to LEWIS the fourteenth, would have been a reſolution worthy of CHARLES the twelfth, king of Sweden, who ſacrificed his country, his people, and himſelf at laſt, to his revenge. To have engaged to conquer the Spaniſh monarchy for the houſe of Auſtria, or to go, in favor of that family, one ſtep beyond thoſe that were neceſſary to keep this houſe on a foot of rivalry with the other, would have been, as I have hinted, to act the part of a vaſſal, not of an ally. The former pawns his ſtate, and ruins his ſubjects, for the intereſt of his ſuperior lord, perhaps for his lord's humor, or his paſſion: the latter goes no further than his own intereſts carry him; nor makes war for thoſe of another, nor even for his own, if they are remote and contingent, as if he fought pro aris et focis, for his religion, his liberty, and his property. Agreeably to theſe principles of good policy, we entered into the war that began on the death of CHARLES the ſecond: but we ſoon departed from them, as I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve in conſidering the ſtate of things, at this remarkable conjuncture, in a view of ſtrength.

LET

LET me recall here what I have ſaid ſomewhere elſe. They who are in the ſinking ſcale of the balance of power do not eaſily, nor ſoon, come off from the habitual prejudices of ſuperiority over their neighbors, nor from the confidence that ſuch prejudices inſpire. From the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, to the end of that century, France had been conſtantly in arms, and her arms had been ſucceſsful. She had ſuſtained a war, without any confederates, againſt the principal powers of Europe confederated againſt her, and had finiſhed it with advantage on every ſide, juſt before the death of the king of SPAIN. She continued armed after the peace, by ſea and land. She increaſed her forces, whilſt other nations reduced theirs; and was ready to defend, or to invade her neighbors whilſt, their confederacy being diſſolved, they were in no condition to invade her, and in a bad one to defend themſelves. Spain and France had now one common cauſe. The electors of BAVARIA and COLOGNE ſupported it in Germany: the duke of SAVOY was an ally, the duke of MANTUA a vaſſal of the two crowns in Italy. In a word, appearances were formidable on that ſide: and if a diſtruſt of ſtrength, on the ſide of the confederacy, had induced England and Holland to compound with France for a partition of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, there ſeemed to be ſtill greater reaſon for this diſtruſt after the acceptation of the will, the peaceable and ready ſubmiſſion of the entire monarchy of Spain to PHILIP, and all the meaſures taken to ſecure him in this poſſeſſion. Such appearances might well impoſe. They did ſo on many, and on none more than on the French themſelves, who engaged with great confidence and ſpirit in the war; when they found it, as they might well expect it would be, unavoidable. The ſtrength of France however, tho great, was not ſo great as the French thought it, nor equal to the efforts they undertook to make. Their engagement, to maintain the

Spaniſh monarchy entire under the dominion of PHILIP, exceeded their ſtrength. Our engagement, to procure ſome out-ſkirts of it for the houſe of Auſtria, was not in the ſame diſproportion to our ſtrength. If I ſpeak poſitively on this occaſion, yet I cannot be accuſed of preſumption; becauſe, how diſputable ſoever theſe points might be when they were points of political ſpeculation, they are ſuch no longer, and the judgment I make is dictated to me by experience. France threw herſelf into the ſinking ſcale, when ſhe accepted the will. Her ſcale continued to ſink during the whole courſe of the war, and might have been kept by the peace as low as the true intereſt of Europe required. What I remember to have heard the duke of MARLBOROUGH ſay, before he went to take on him the command of the army in the Low Countries in one thouſand ſeven hundred and two, proved true. The French miſreckoned very much, if they made the ſame compariſon between their troops and thoſe of their enemies, as they had made in precedent wars. Thoſe that had been oppoſed to them, in the laſt, were raw for the moſt part when it began, the Britiſh particularly: but they had been diſciplined, if I may ſay ſo, by their defeats. They were grown to be veteran at the peace of Ryſwic, and tho many had been diſbanded, yet they had been diſbanded lately: ſo that even theſe were eaſily formed a-new, and the ſpirit that had been raiſed continued in all. Supplies of men to recruit the armies were more abundant on the ſide of the confederacy, than on that of the two crowns: a neceſſary conſequence of which it ſeemed to be, that thoſe of the former would grow better, and thoſe of the latter worſe, in a long, extenſive, and bloody war. I believe it proved ſo; and if my memory does not deceive me, the French were forced very early to ſend recruits to their armies, as they ſend ſlaves to their galleys. A compariſon between thoſe who were to direct the councils, and

and to conduct the armies on both ſides, is a taſk it would become me little to undertake. The event ſhewed, that if France had had her CONDE', her TURENNE, or her LUXEMBURG, to oppoſe to the confederates; the confederates might have oppoſed to her, with equal confidence, their EUGENE of Savoy, their MARLBOROUGH, or their STARENBERG But there is one obſervation I cannot forbear to make. The alliances were concluded, the quotas were ſettled, and the ſeaſon for taking the field approached, when king WILLIAM died. The event could not fail to occaſion ſome conſternation on one ſide, and to give ſome hopes on the other; for, notwithſtanding the ill ſucceſs with which he made war generally, he was looked upon as the ſole centre of union that could keep together the great confederacy then forming: and how much the French feared, from his life, had appeared a few years before, in the extravagant and indecent joy they expreſſed on a falſe report of his death. A ſhort time ſhewed how vain the fears of ſome, and the hopes of others were. By his death, the duke of MARLBOROUGH was raiſed to the head of the army, and indeed of the confederacy: where he, a new, a private man, a ſubject, acquired by merit and by management a more deciding influence, than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain, had given to king WILLIAM. Not only all the parts of that vaſt machine, the grand alliance, were kept more compact and entire; but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole: and, inſtead of languiſhing or diſaſtrous campaigns, we ſaw every ſcene of the war full of action. All thoſe wherein he appeared, and many of thoſe wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor however of their action, were crowned with the moſt triumphant ſucceſs. I take with pleaſure this opportunity of doing juſtice to that great man, whoſe faults I knew, whoſe virtues I admired; and whoſe memory, as the

greateſt general and as the greateſt miniſter that our country or perhaps any other has produced, I honor. But beſides this, the obſervation I have made comes into my ſubject, ſince it ſerves to point out to your lordſhip the proof of what I ſaid above, that France undertook too much, when ſhe undertook to maintain the Spaniſh monarchy entire in the poſſeſſion of PHILIP: and that we undertook no more than what was proportionable to our ſtrength, when we undertook to weaken that monarchy by diſmembering it, in the hands of a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, which we had been diſabled by ill fortune and worſe conduct to keep out of them. It may be ſaid that the great ſucceſs of the confederates againſt France proves that their generals were ſuperior to her's, but not that their forces and their national ſtrength were ſo; that with the ſame force with which ſhe was beaten, ſhe might have been victorious; that if ſhe had been ſo, or if the ſucceſs of the war had varied, or been leſs deciſive againſt her in Germany, in the Low Countries, and in Italy, as it was in Spain, her ſtrength would have appeared ſufficient, and that of the confederacy inſufficient. Many things may be urged to deſtroy this reaſoning: I content myſelf with one. France could not long have made even the unſucceſsful efforts ſhe did make, if England and Holland had done what it is undeniable they had ſtrength to do; if beſides pillaging, I do not ſay conquering, the Spaniſh Weſt Indies, they had hindered the French from going to the South Sea; as they did annually during the whole courſe of the war without the leaſt moleſtation, and from whence they imported into France in that time as much ſilver and gold as the whole ſpecies of that kingdom amounted to. With this immenſe and conſtant ſupply of wealth France was reduced in effect to bankruptcy before the end of the war. How much ſooner muſt ſhe have been ſo, if this ſupply had been kept from her? The

The confeſſion of France herſelf is on my ſide. She confeſſed her inability to ſupport what ſhe had undertaken, when ſhe ſued for peace as early as the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. She made her utmoſt efforts to anſwer the expectation of the Spaniards, and to keep their monarchy entire. When experience had made it evident that this was beyond her power, ſhe thought herſelf juſtified to the Spaniſh nation, in conſenting to a partition, and was ready to conclude a peace with the allies on the principles of their grand alliance. But as France ſeemed to flatter herſelf, till experience made her deſirous to abandon an enterpriſe that exceeded her ſtrength; you will find, my lord, that her enemies began to flatter themſelves in their turn, and to form deſigns and take engagements that exceeded theirs. Great Britain was drawn into theſe engagements little by little; for I do not remember any parliamentary declaration for continuing the war till PHILIP ſhould be dethroned, before the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix: and then ſuch a declaration was judged neceſſary to ſecond the reſolution of our miniſters and our allies, in departing from the principle of the grand alliance, and in propoſing not only the reduction of the French, but the conqueſt of the Spaniſh monarchy, as the objects of the war. This new plan had taken place, and we had begun to act upon it, two years before, when the treaty with Portugal was concluded, and the archduke CHARLES, now emperor, was ſent into Portugal firſt, and into Catalonia afterwards, and was acknowledged and ſupported as king of Spain.

WHEN your lordſhip peruſes the anecdotes of the times here ſpoken of, and conſiders the courſe and event of the great war which broke out on the death of the king of Spain, CHARLES the ſecond, and was ended by the treaties of Utrecht and Radſtat; you will find, that in order to form a true judgment

judgment on the whole you muſt conſider very attentively the great change made by the new plan that I have mentioned; and compare it with the plan of the grand alliance, relatively to the general intereſt of Europe, and the particular intereſt of your own country. It will not, becauſe it cannot, be denied, that all the ends of the grand alliance might have been obtained by a peace in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. I need not recal the events of that, and of the precedent years of the war. Not only the arms of France had been defeated on every ſide; but the inward ſtate of that kingdom was already more exhauſted than it had ever been. She went on indeed, but ſhe ſtaggered and reeled under the burden of the war. Our condition, I ſpeak of Great Britain, was not quite ſo bad: but the charge of the war increaſed annually upon us. It was evident that this charge muſt continue to increaſe, and it was no leſs evident that our nation was unable to bear it without falling ſoon into ſuch diſtreſs, and contracting ſuch debts, as we have ſeen and felt, and ſtill feel. The Dutch neither reſtrained their trade, nor over-loaded it with taxes. They ſoon altered the proportion of their quotas, and were deficient even after this alteration in them. But, however, it muſt be allowed, that they exerted their whole ſtrength; and they and we paid the whole charge of the war. Since therefore by ſuch efforts as could not be continued any longer, without oppreſſing and impoveriſhing theſe nations to a degree that no intereſt except that of their very being, nor any engagement of aſſiſting an alliance totis viribus can require, France was reduced, and all the ends of the war were become attainable; it will be worth your lordſhip's while to conſider, why the true uſe was not made of the ſucceſs of the confederates againſt France and Spain, and why a peace was not concluded in the fifth year of the war. When your lordſhip conſiders this, you will compare in your thoughts what

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the ſtate of Europe would have been, and that of your own country might have been, if the plan of the grand alliance had been purſued; with the poſſible as well as certain, the contingent as well as neceſſary, conſequences of changing this plan in the manner it was changed. You will be of opinion, I think, and it ſeems to me, after more than twenty years of recollection, re-examination, and reflection, that impartial poſterity muſt be of the ſame opinion; you will be of opinion, I think, that the war was wiſe and juſt before the change, becauſe neceſſary to maintain that equality among the powers of Europe on which the public peace and common proſperity depends: and that it was unwiſe and unjuſt after this change, becauſe unneceſſary to this end, and directed to other and to contrary ends. You will be guided by undeniable facts to diſcover, through all the falſe colors which have been laid, and which deceived many at the time, that the war, after this change, became a war of paſſion, of ambition, of avarice, and of private intereſt; the private intereſt of particular perſons and particular ſtates; to which the general intereſt of Europe was ſacrificed ſo entirely, that if the terms inſiſted on by the confederates had been granted, nay if even thoſe which France was reduced to grant, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, had been accepted, ſuch a new ſyſtem of power would have been created as might have expoſed the balance of this power to deviations, and the peace of Europe to troubles, not inferior to thoſe that the war was deſigned, when it began, to prevent. Whilſt you obſerve this in general, you will find particular occaſion to lament the fate of Great Britain, in the midſt of triumphs that have been founded ſo high. She had triumphed indeed to the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix incluſively: but what were her triumphs afterwards? What was her ſucceſs after ſhe proceeded on the new plan? I ſhall ſay ſomething on that head immediately.

Here let me only ſay, that the glory of taking towns, and winning battles, is to be meaſured by the utility that reſults from thoſe victories. Victories, that bring honor to the arms, may bring ſhame to the councils, of a nation. To win a battle, to take a town, is the glory of a general, and of an army. Of this glory we had a very large ſhare in the courſe of the war. But the glory of a nation is to proportion the end ſhe propoſes, to her intereſt and her ſtrength; the means ſhe employs, to the ends ſhe propoſes, and the vigor ſhe exerts, to both. Of this glory, I apprehend, we have had very little to boaſt at any time, and particularly in the great conjuncture of which I am ſpeaking. The reaſons of ambition, avarice, and private intereſt, which engaged the princes and ſtates of the confederacy to depart from the principles of the grand alliance, were no reaſons for Great Britain. She neither expected nor deſired any thing more than what ſhe might have obtained by adhering to thoſe principles. What hurried our nation then, with ſo much ſpirit and ardor, into thoſe of the new plan? Your lordſhip will anſwer this queſtion to yourſelf, I believe, by the prejudices and raſhneſs of party; by the influence that the firſt ſucceſſes of the confederate arms gave to our miniſters; and the popularity that they gave, if I may ſay ſo, to the war; by ancient and freſh reſentments, which the unjuſt and violent uſurpations, in ſhort the whole conduct of LEWIS the fourteenth for forty years together, his haughty treatment of other princes and ſtates, and even the ſtile of his court, had created; and, to mention no more, by a notion, groundleſs but prevalent, that he was and would be maſter as long as his grandſon was king of Spain, and that there could be no effectual meaſure taken, tho the grand alliance ſuppoſed that there might, to prevent a future union of the two monarchies, as long as a prince of the houſe of Bourbon ſat on the Spaniſh throne. That ſuch a notion ſhould have prevailed,

prevailed, in the firſt confuſion of thoughts which the death and will of CHARLES the ſecond produced, among the generality of men, who ſaw the fleets and armies of France take poſſeſſion of all the parts of the Spaniſh monarchy, is not to be wondered at by thoſe that conſider how ill the generality of mankind are informed, how incapable they are of judging, and yet how ready to pronounce judgment; in fine, how inconſiderately they follow one another in any popular opinion which the heads of party broach, or to which the firſt appearances of things have given occaſion. But, even at this time, the councils of England and Holland did not entertain this notion. They acted on quite another, as might be ſhewn in many inſtances, if any other beſides that of the grand alliance was neceſſary. When theſe councils therefore ſeemed to entertain this notion afterwards, and acted and took engagements to act upon it, we muſt conclude that they had other motives. They could not have theſe; for they knew, that as the Spaniards had been driven by the two treaties of partition to give their monarchy to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, ſo they were driven into the arms of France by the war that we made to force a third upon them. If we acted rightly on the principles of the grand alliance, they acted rightly on thoſe of the will: and if we could not avoid making an offenſive war, at the expence of forming and maintaining a vaſt confederacy, they could not avoid purchaſing the protection and aſſiſtance of France in a defenſive war, and eſpecially in the beginning of it, according to what I have ſomewhere obſerved already, by yielding to the authority and admitting the influence of that court in all the affairs of their government. Our miniſters knew therefore, that if any inference was to be drawn from the firſt part of this notion, it was for ſhortening, not prolonging, the war; for delivering the Spaniards as ſoon as poſſible from habits of union and intimacy with France;

not for continuing them under the ſame neceſſity, till by length of time theſe habits ſhould be confirmed. As to the latter part of this notion, they knew that it was falſe, and ſilly. GARTH, the beſt natured ingenious wild man I ever knew, might be in the right, when he ſaid, in ſome of his poems at that time,

" ----- An Auſtrian prince alone
" Is fit to nod upon a Spaniſh throne."

The ſetting an Auſtrian prince upon it was, no doubt, the ſureſt expedient to prevent an union of the two monarchies of France and Spain; juſt as ſetting a prince of the houſe of Bourbon on that throne was the ſureſt expedient to prevent an union of the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns. But it was equally falſe to ſay, in either caſe, that this was the ſole expedient. It would be no paradox, but a propoſition eaſily proved, to advance, that if theſe unions had been effectually provided againſt, the general intereſt of Europe would have been little concerned whether PHILIP or CHARLES had nodded at Madrid It would be likewiſe no paradox to ſay, that the contingency of uniting France and Spain under the ſame prince appeared more remote, about the middle of the laſt great war, when the dethronement of PHILIP in favor of CHARLES was made a condition of peace ſine qua non, than the contingency of an union of the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns. Nay, I know not whether it would be a paradox to affirm, that the expedient that was taken, and that was always obvious to be taken, of excluding PHILIP and his race from the ſucceſſion of France, by creating an intereſt in all the other princes of the blood, and by conſequence a party in France itſelf, for their excluſion, whenever the caſe ſhould happen, was not in it's nature more effectual than any that

could have been taken: and ſome muſt have been taken, not only to exclude CHARLES from the empire whenever the caſe ſhould happen that happened ſoon, the death of his brother JOSEPH without iſſue male, but his poſterity likewiſe in all future vacancies of the imperial throne. The expedient that was taken againſt PHILIP at the treaty of Utrecht, they who oppoſed the peace attempted to ridicule; but ſome of them have had occaſion ſince that time to ſee, tho the caſe has not happened, how effectual it would have been if it had: and he, who ſhould go about to ridicule it after our experience, would only make himſelf ridiculous. Notwithſtanding all this, he who tranſports himſelf back to that time, muſt acknowledge, that the confederated powers in general could not but be of GARTH's mind, and think it more agreeable to the common intereſt of Europe, that a branch of Auſtria than a branch of Bourbon, ſhould gather the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, and that the maritime powers, as they are called impertinently enough with reſpect to the ſuperiority of Great Britain, might think it was for their particular intereſt to have a prince, dependant for ſome time at leaſt on them, king of Spain, rather than a prince whoſe dependance, as long as he ſtood in any, muſt be naturally on France. I do not ſay, as ſome have done, a prince whoſe family was an old ally, rather than a prince whoſe family was an old enemy; becauſe I lay no weight on the gratitude of princes, and am as much perſuaded that an Auſtrian king of Spain would have made us returns of that ſort in no other proportion than of his want of us, as I am that PHILIP and his race will make no other returns of the ſame ſort to France. If this affair had been entire, therefore, on the death of the king of SPAIN; if we had made no partition, nor he any will, the whole monarchy of Spain would have been the prize to be fought for: and our wiſhes, and ſuch efforts as we were able to make, in the

moſt

moſt unprovided condition imaginable, muſt have been on the ſide of Auſtria. But it was far from being entire. A prince of the houſe of Auſtria might have been on the ſpot, before the king of SPAIN died, to gather his ſucceſſion; but inſtead of this a prince of the houſe of Bourbon was there ſoon afterwards, and took poſſeſſion of the whole monarchy, to which he had been called by the late king's will, and by the voice of the Spaniſh nation. The councils of England and Holland therefore preferred very wiſely, by their engagements in the grand alliance, what was more practicable tho leſs eligible, to what they deemed more eligible, but ſaw become by the courſe of events, if not abſolutely impracticable, yet an enterpriſe of more length, more difficulty, and greater expence of blood and treaſure, than theſe nations were able to bear; or than they ought to bear, when their ſecurity and that of the reſt of Europe might be ſufficiently provided for at a cheaper rate. If the confederates could not obtain, by the force of their arms, the ends of the war, laid down in the grand alliance, to what purpoſe would it be to ſtipulate for more? And if they were able to obtain theſe, it was evident that, whilſt they diſmembered the Spaniſh monarchy, they muſt reduce the power of France. This happened; the Low Countries were conquered; the French were driven out of Germany and Italy: and LEWIS the fourteenth, who had ſo long and ſo lately ſet mankind at defiance, was reduced to ſue for peace.

IF it had been granted him in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, on what foot muſt it have been granted? The allies had already in their power all the ſtates that were to compoſe the reaſonable ſatisfaction for the emperor. I ſay, in their power; becauſe tho Naples and Sicily were not actually reduced at that time, yet the expulſion of the French out of Italy,

Italy, and the diſpoſition of the people of thoſe kingdoms, conſidered, it was plain the allies might reduce them when they pleaſed. The confederate arms were ſuperior till then in Spain, and ſeveral provinces acknowledged CHARLES the third. If the reſt had been yielded to him by treaty, all that the new plan required had been obtained. If the French would not yet have abandoned PHILIP, as we had found that the Caſtilians would not even when our army was at Madrid, all that the old plan, the plan of the grand alliance required, had been obtained; but ſtill France and Spain had given nothing to purchaſe a peace, and they were in circumſtances not to expect it without purchaſing it. They would have purchaſed it, my lord: and France, as well as Spain, would have contributed a larger ſhare of the price, rather than continue the war, in her exhauſted ſtate. Such a treaty of peace would have been a third treaty of partition indeed, but vaſtly preferable to the two former. The great objection to the former was drawn from that conſiderable increaſe of dominion, which the crown of France, and not a branch of the houſe of Bourbon, acquired by them. I know what may be ſaid ſpeciouſly enough to perſuade, that ſuch an increaſe of dominion would not have augmented, but would rather have weakened the power of France, and what examples may be drawn from hiſtory to countenance ſuch an opinion. I know likewiſe, that the compact figure of France, and the contiguity of all her provinces, make a very eſſential part of the force of her monarchy. Had the deſigns of CHARLES the eighth, LEWIS the twelfth, FRANCIS the firſt, and HENRY the ſecond, ſucceeded, the dominions of France, would have been more extenſive, and I believe the ſtrength of her monarchy would have been leſs. I have ſometimes thought that even the loſs of the battle of St. Quentin, which obliged HENRY the ſecond to recal the duke of GUISE with his army out of Italy,

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was in this reſpect no unhappy event. But the reaſoning which is good, I think, when applied to thoſe times, will not hold when applied to ours, and to the caſe I conſider here; the ſtate of France, the ſtate of her neighbors, and the whole conſtitution of Europe being ſo extremely different. The objection therefore to the two treaties of partition had a real weight. The power of France, deemed already exorbitant, would have been increaſed by this acceſſion of dominion, in the hands of LEWIS the fourteenth: and the uſe he intended to make of it, by keeping Italy and Spain in awe, appears in the article that gave him the ports on the Tuſcan coaſt, and the province of Guipuſcoa. This king WILLIAM might, and, I queſtion not, did ſee; but that prince might think too, that for this very reaſon LEWIS the fourteenth would adhere, in all events, to the treaty of partition: and that theſe conſequences were more remote, and would be leſs dangerous, than thoſe of making no partition at all. The partition, even the worſt that might have been made, by a treaty of peace in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, would have been the very reverſe of this. France would have been weakened, and her enemies ſtrengthened, by her conceſſions on the ſide of the Low Countries, of Germany and Savoy. If a prince of her royal family had remained in poſſeſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, no advantage would have accrued to her by it, and effectual bars would have been oppoſed to an union of the two monarchies. The houſe of Auſtria would have had a reaſonable ſatisfaction for that ſhadow of right, which a former partition gave her. She had no other after the will of CHARLES the ſecond: and this may be juſtly termed a ſhadow, ſince England, Holland, and France could confer no real right to the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, nor to any part of it. She had declined acceding to that partition, before France departed from it, and would have preferred the Italian provinces, without

Spain

Spain and the Weſt-Indies, to Spain and the Weſt-Indies without the Italian provinces. The Italian provinces would have fallen to her ſhare by this partition. The particular demands of England and Holland would have ſuffered no difficulty, and thoſe that we were obliged by treaty to make for others would have been eaſy to adjuſt. Would not this have been enough, my lord, for the public ſecurity, for the common intereſt, and for the glory of our arms? To have humbled and reduced, in five campaigns, a power that had diſturbed and inſulted Europe almoſt forty years; to have reſtored, in ſo ſhort a time, the balance of power in Europe to a ſufficient point of equality, after it had been more than fifty years, that is from the treaty of Weſtphalia, in a gradual deviation from this point; in ſhort to have retrieved, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, a game that was become deſperate at the beginning of the century. To have done all this, before the war had exhauſted our ſtrength, was the utmoſt ſure that any man could deſire who intended the public good alone: and no honeſt reaſon ever was, nor ever will be given, why the war was protracted any longer; why we neither made peace after a ſhort, vigorous, and ſucceſsful war, nor put it entirely out of the power of France to continue at any rate a long one. I have ſaid, and it is true, that this had been entirely out of her power, if we had given greater interruption to the commerce of Old and New Spain, and if we had hindered France from importing annually, from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and two, ſuch immenſe treaſures as ſhe did import by the ſhips ſhe ſent, with the permiſſion of Spain, to the South Sea. It has been advanced, and it is a common opinion, that we were reſtrained by the jealouſy of the Dutch from making uſe of the liberty given by treaty to them and us, and which, without his imperial majeſty's leave, ſince we entered into the war, we might have taken, of mak-

ing conqueſts in the Spaniſh Weſt-Indies. Be it ſo. But to go to the South Seas, to trade there if we could, to pillage the Weſt-Indies without making conqueſts if we could not, and, whether we traded or whether we pillaged, to hinder the French from trading there; was a meaſure that would have given, one ought to think, no jealouſy to the Dutch, who might, and it is to be ſuppoſed would, have taken their part in theſe expeditions; or if it had given them jealouſy, what could they have replied when a Britiſh miniſter had told them: "That it little became them to find fault that we "traded with or pillaged the Spaniards in the Weſt-Indies to "the detriment of our common enemy, whilſt we connived "at them who traded with this enemy to his and their great "advantage, againſt our remonſtrances, and in violation of the "condition upon which we had given the firſt augmentation "of our forces in the Low Countries?" We might have purſued this meaſure notwithſtanding any engagement that we took by the treaty with Portugal, if I remember that treaty right: but inſtead of this, we waſted our forces, and ſquandered millions after millions in ſupporting our alliance with this crown, and in purſuing the chimerical project which was made the object of this alliance. I call it chimerical, becauſe it was equally ſo, to expect a revolution in favor of CHARLES the third on the ſlender authority of ſuch a trifler as the admiral of Caſtile; and, when this failed us, to hope to conquer Spain by the aſſiſtance of the Portugueſe, and the revolt of the Catalans. Yet this was the foundation upon which the new plan of the war was built, and ſo many ruinous engagements were taken.

THE particular motives of private men, as well as of princes and ſtates, to protract the war, are partly known, and partly gueſſed, at this time. But whenever that time comes, and

I am perſuaded it will come, when their ſecret motives, their ſecret deſigns, and intrigues, can be laid open, I preſume to ſay to your lordſhip that the moſt confuſed ſcene of iniquity, and folly, that it is poſſible to imagine, will appear. In the mean while, if your lordſhip conſiders only the treaty of barrier, as my lord TOWNSHEND ſigned it, without, nay in truth, againſt orders; for the duke of MARLBOROUGH, tho joint plenipotentiary, did not: if you conſider the famous preliminaries of one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, which we made a mock-ſhew of ratifying, tho we knew that they would not be accepted; for ſo the marquis of TORCY had told the penſionary before he left the Hague, as the ſaid marquis has aſſured me very often ſince that time: if you enquire into the anecdotes of Gertruydenberg, and if you conſult other authentic papers that are extant, your lordſhip will ſee the policy of the new plan, I think, in this light. Tho we had refuſed, before the war began, to enter into engagements for the conqueſt of Spain, yet as ſoon as it began, when the reaſon of things was ſtill the ſame, for the ſucceſs of our firſt campaign cannot be ſaid to have altered it, we entered into theſe very engagements. By the treaty wherein we took theſe engagements firſt, Portugal was brought into the grand alliance; that is, ſhe conſented to employ her formidable forces againſt PHILIP, at the expence of England and Holland, provided we would debar ourſelves from making any acquiſitions, and the houſe of Auſtria promiſe, that ſhe ſhould acquire many important places in Spain, and an immenſe extent of country in America. By ſuch bargains as this, the whole confederacy was formed, and held together. Such means were indeed effectual to multiply enemies to France and Spain; but a project ſo extenſive and ſo difficult as to make many bargains of this kind neceſſary, and neceſſary for a great number of years, and for a very uncertain event, was a project into which, for

this very reaſon, England and Holland ſhould not have entered. It is worthy your obſervation, my lord, that theſe bad bargains would not have been continued, as they were almoſt to our immediate ruin, if the war had not been protracted under the pretended neceſſity of reducing the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the obedience of the houſe of Auſtria. Now, as no other confederate except Portugal was to receive his recompence by any diſmemberment of dominions in Old or New Spain, the engagements we took to conquer this whole monarchy had no viſible neceſſary cauſe, but the procuring the acceſſion of this power, that was already neuter, to the grand alliance. This acceſſion, as I have ſaid before, ſerved only to make us neglect immediate and certain advantages, for remote and uncertain hopes; and chuſe to attempt the conqueſt of the Spaniſh nation at our own vaſt expence, whom we might have ſtarved, and by ſtarving reduced both the French and them, at their expence.

I called the neceſſity of reducing the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the obedience of the houſe of Auſtria, a pretended neceſſity: and pretended it was, not real, without doubt. But I am apt to think your lordſhip may go further, and find ſome reaſons to ſuſpect, that the opinion itſelf of this neceſſity was not very real, in the minds of thoſe who urged it: in the minds I would ſay of the able men among them; for that it was real in ſome of our zealous Britiſh politicians, I do them the juſtice to believe. Your lordſhip may find reaſons to ſuſpect perhaps, that this opinion was ſet up rather to occaſion a diverſion of the forces of France, and to furniſh pretences for prolonging the war for other ends.

Before the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, the war was kept alive with alternate ſucceſs in Spain; and it may

may be ſaid therefore, that the deſign of conquering this kingdom continued, as well as the hopes of ſucceeding. But why then did the States General refuſe, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, to admit an article in the barrier treaty, by which they would have obliged themſelves to procure the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the houſe of Auſtria, when that zealous politician my lord TOWNSHEND preſſed them to it? If their opinion of the neceſſity of carrying on the war, till this point could be obtained, was real; why did they riſque the immenſe advantages given them with ſo much profuſe generoſity by this treaty, rather than conſent to an engagement that was ſo conformable to their opinion?

AFTER the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, it will not be ſaid, I preſume, that the war could be ſupported in Spain with any proſpect of advantage on our ſide. We had ſufficiently experienced how little dependance could be had on the vigor of the Portugueſe; and how firmly the Spaniſh nation in general, the Caſtilians in particular, were attached to PHILIP. Our armies had been twice at Madrid, this prince had been twice driven from his capital, his rival had been there, none ſtirred in favor of the victorious, all wiſhed and acted for the vanquiſhed. In ſhort, the falſhood of all thoſe lures, by which we had been enticed to make war in Spain, had appeared ſufficiently in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; but was ſo groſly evident in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, that Mr. CRAGGS, who was ſent towards the end of that year by Mr. STANHOPE into England, on commiſſions which he executed with much good ſenſe and much addreſs, owned to me, that in Mr. STANHOPE's opinion, and he was not apt to deſpond of ſucceſs, eſpecially in the execution of his own projects, nothing could be done more in Spain, the general attachment of the people to PHILIP, and

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their averſion to CHARLES conſidered: that armies of twenty or thirty thouſand men might walk about that country till dooms-day, ſo he expreſſed himſelf, without effect: that wherever they came, the people would ſubmit to CHARLES the third out of terror, and as ſoon as they were gone, proclaim PHILIP the fifth again out of affection: that to conquer Spain required a great army; and to keep it, a greater.

WAS it poſſible, after this, to think in good earneſt of conquering Spain, and could they be in good earneſt who continued to hold the ſame language, and to inſiſt on the ſame meaſures? Could they be ſo in the following year, when the emperor JOSEPH died? CHARLES was become then the ſole ſurviving male of the houſe of Auſtria, and ſucceeded to the empire as well as to all the hereditary dominions of that family. Could they be in earneſt who maintained, even in this conjuncture, that "no peace could be ſafe, honorable, or "laſting, ſo long as the kingdom of Spain and the Weſt-In-"dies remained in the poſſeſſion of any branch of the houſe "of Bourbon?" Did they mean that CHARLES ſhould be emperor and king of Spain? In this project they would have had the allies againſt them. Did they mean to call the duke of SAVOY to the crown of Spain, or to beſtow it on ſome other prince? In this project they would have had his imperial majeſty againſt them. In either caſe the confederacy would have been broken: and how then would they have continued the war? Did they mean nothing, or did they mean ſomething more than they owned, ſomething more than to reduce the exorbitant power of France, and to force the whole Spaniſh monarchy out of the houſe of Bourbon?

BOTH theſe ends might have been obtained at Gertruydenberg. Why were they not obtained? Read the preliminaries

of one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, which were made the foundation of this treaty. Inform yourſelf of what paſſed there, and obſerve what followed. Your lordſhip will remain aſtoniſhed. I remain ſo every time I reflect upon them, tho I ſaw theſe things at no very great diſtance, even whilſt they were in tranſaction; and tho I know moſt certainly that France loſt, two years before, by the little ſkill and addreſs of her principal * miniſter, in anſwering overtures made during the ſiege of Liſle by a principal perſon among the allies, ſuch an opportunity, and ſuch a correſpondence, as would have removed ſome of the obſtacles that lay now in her way, have prevented others, and have procured her peace. An equivalent for the thirty-ſeventh article of the preliminaries, that is, for the ceſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, was the point to be diſcuſſed at Gertruydenberg. Naples and Sicily, or even Naples and Sardinia would have contented the French, at leaſt they would have accepted them as the equivalent. BUYS and VANDERDUSSEN, who treated with them, reported this to the miniſters of the allies: and it was upon this occaſion that the duke of MARLBOROUGH, as BUYS himſelf told me, took immediately the lead, and congratulated the aſſembly on the near approach of a peace; ſaid, that ſince the French were in this diſpoſition, it was time to conſider what further demands ſhould be made upon them, according to the liberty reſerved in the preliminaries; and exhorted all the miniſters of the allies to adjuſt their ſeveral ulterior pretenſions, and to prepare their demands.

THIS proceeding, and what followed, put me in mind of that of the Romans with the Carthaginians. The former were reſolved to conſent to no peace till Carthage was laid

* CHAMILLARD.

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in ruins. They ſet a treaty however on foot, at the requeſt of their old enemy, impoſed ſome terms, and referred them to their generals for the reſt. Their generals purſued the ſame method, and, by reſerving ſtill a right of making ulterior demands, they reduced the Carthaginians at laſt to the neceſſity of abandoning their city, or of continuing the war after they had given up their arms, their machines, and their fleet, in hopes of peace.

FRANCE ſaw the ſnare, and reſolved to run any riſque rather than to be caught in it. We continued to demand, under pretence of ſecuring the ceſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, that LEWIS the fourteenth ſhould take on him to dethrone his grandſon in the ſpace of two months; and, if he did not effect it in that time, that we ſhould be at liberty to renew the war without reſtoring the places that were to be put into our hands according to the preliminaries; which were the moſt important places France poſſeſſed on the ſide of the Low-Countries. LEWIS offered to abandon his grandſon; and, if he could not prevail on him to reſign, to furniſh money to the allies, who might at the expence of France force him to evacuate Spain. The propoſition made by the allies had an air of inhumanity: and the reſt of mankind might be ſhocked to ſee the grandfather obliged to make war on his grandſon. But LEWIS the fourteenth had treated mankind with too much inhumanity in his proſperous days, to have any reaſon to complain even of this propoſition. His people indeed, who are apt to have great partiality for their kings, might pity his diſtreſs. This happened, and he found his account in it. PHILIP muſt have evacuated Spain, I think, notwithſtanding his own obſtinacy, the ſpirit of his queen, and the reſolute attachment of the Spaniards, if his grandfather had inſiſted, and been in earneſt to force him. But if this expedient

dient was, as it was, odious, why did we prefer to continue the war againſt France and Spain, rather than accept the other? why did we neglect the opportunity of reducing, effectually and immediately, the exorbitant power of France, and of rendering the conqueſt of Spain practicable? both which might have been brought about, and conſequently the avowed ends of the war might have been anſwered, by accepting the expedient that France offered. "France," it was ſaid, "was not ſincere: ſhe meant nothing more than to amuſe, "and divide." This reaſon was given at the time; but ſome of thoſe who gave it then, I have ſeen aſhamed to inſiſt on it ſince. France was not in a condition to act the part ſhe had acted in former treaties: and her diſtreſs was no bad pledge of her ſincerity on this occaſion. But there was a better ſtill. The ſtrong places that ſhe muſt have put into the hands of the allies, would have expoſed her, on the leaſt breach of faith, to ſee, not her frontier alone, but even the provinces that lie behind it, deſolated: and prince EUGENE might have had the ſatisfaction, it is ſaid, I know not how truly, he deſired, of marching with the torch in his hand to Verſailles.

YOUR lordſhip will obſerve, that the conferences at Gertruydenberg ending in the manner they did, the inflexibility of the allies gave new life and ſpirit to the French and Spaniſh nations, diſtreſſed and exhauſted as they were. The troops of the former withdrawn out of Spain, and the Spaniards left to defend themſelves as they could, the Spaniards alone obliged us to retreat from Madrid, and defeated us in our retreat. But your lordſhip may think perhaps, as I do, that if LEWIS the fourteenth had bound himſelf by a ſolemn treaty to abandon his grandſon, had paid a ſubſidy to dethrone him, and had conſented to acknowledge another king of Spain, the Spaniards would not have exerted the ſame zeal for PHILIP;

the actions of Almenara and Saragoſſa might have been deciſive, and thoſe of Brihuega and Villa Vicioſa would not have happened. After all theſe events, how could any reaſonable man expect that a war ſhould be ſupported with advantage in Spain, to which the court of Vienna had contributed nothing from the firſt, ſcarce bread to their archduke; which Portugal waged faintly and with deficient quotas; and which the Dutch had in a manner renounced, by neglecting to recruit their forces? How was CHARLES to be placed on the Spaniſh throne, or PHILIP at leaſt be driven out of it? By the ſucceſs of the confederate arms in other parts. But what ſucceſs, ſufficient to this purpoſe, could we expect? This queſtion may be anſwered beſt, by ſhewing what ſucceſs we had.

PORTUGAL and Savoy did nothing before the death of the emperor JOSEPH; and declared in form, as ſoon as he was dead, that they would carry on the war no longer to ſet the crown of Spain on the head of CHARLES, ſince this would be to fight againſt the very principle they had fought for. The Rhine was a ſcene of inaction. The ſole efforts, that were to bring about the great event of dethroning PHILIP, were thoſe which the duke of MARLBOROUGH was able to make. He took three towns in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant: and one, Bouchain, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven. Now this conqueſt being in fact the only one the confederates made that year, Bouchain may be ſaid properly and truly to have coſt our nation very near ſeven millions ſterling; for your lordſhip will find, I believe, that the charge of the war for that year amounted to no leſs. It is true that the duke of MARLBOROUGH had propoſed a very great project, by which incurſions would have been made during the winter into France; the next campaign might have been opened early on our ſide;

and

and ſeveral other great and obvious advantages might have been obtained: but the Dutch refuſed to contribute, even leſs than their proportion, for the queen had offered to take the deficiency on herſelf, to the expence of barracks and forage; and diſappointed by their obſtinacy the whole deſign.

WE were then amuſed with viſionary ſchemes of marching our whole army, in a year or two more, and after a town or two more were taken, directly to Paris, or at leaſt in the heart of France. But was this ſo eaſy or ſo ſure a game? The French expected we would play it. Their generals had viſited the ſeveral poſts they might take, when our army ſhould enter France, to retard, to incommode, to diſtreſs us in our march, and even to make a deciſive ſtand and to give us battle. I take what I ſay here from indiſputable authority, that of the perſons conſulted and employed in preparing for this great diſtreſs. Had we been beaten, or had we been forced to retire towards our own frontier in the Low Countries, after penetrating into France, the hopes on which we protracted the war would have been diſappointed, and, I think, the moſt ſanguine would have then repented refuſing the offers made at Gertruydenberg. But if we had beaten the French, for it was ſcarce lawful in thoſe days of our preſumption to ſuppoſe the contrary; would the whole monarchy of Spain have been our immediate and certain prize? Suppoſe, and I ſuppoſe it on good grounds, my lord, that the French had reſolved to defend their country inch by inch, and that LEWIS the fourteenth had determined to retire with his court to Lyons or elſewhere, and to defend the paſſage of the Loire, when he could no longer defend that of the Seine, rather than ſubmit to the terms impoſed on him: what ſhould we have done in this caſe? Muſt we not have accepted ſuch a peace as we had refuſed; or have protracted the war till we had conquered

France firſt, in order to conquer Spain afterwards? Did we hope for revolutions in France? We had hoped for them in Spain: and we ſhould have been bubbles of our hopes in both. That there was a ſpirit raiſed againſt the government of LEWIS the fourteenth, in his court, nay in his family, and that ſtrange ſchemes of private ambition were formed and forming there, I cannot doubt: and ſome effects of this ſpirit produced perhaps the greateſt mortifications that he ſuffered in the latter part of his reign.

A LIGHT inſtance of this ſpirit is all I will quote at this time. I ſupped, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifteen, at a houſe in France, where two * perſons of no ſmall figure, who had been in great company that night, arrived very late. The converſation turned on the events of the precedent war, and the negotiations of the late peace. In the proceſs of the converſation, one of them † broke looſe, and ſaid, directing his diſcourſe to me, "Vous auriez pu nous écraſer dans "ce tems-là: pourquoi ne l'avez-vous pas fait?" I anſwered him cooly, "Par ce que dans ce tems-là nous n'avons plus "craint vôtre puiſſance." This anecdote, too trivial for hiſtory, may find it's place in a letter, and may ſerve to confirm what I have admitted, that there were perſons even in France, who expected to find their private account in the diſtreſs of their country. But theſe perſons were a few, men of wild imaginations and ſtrong paſſions, more enterpriſing than capable, and of more name than credit. In general, the endeavors of LEWIS the fourteenth, and the ſacrifices he offered to make in order to obtain a peace, had attached his people more than ever to him: and if LEWIS had determined not to go any farther than he had offered at Gertruydenberg, in abandon-

* The dukes de LA FEUILLADE and MORTEMAR.
† LA FEUILLADE.

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ing his grandſon, the French nation would not have abandoned him.

BUT to reſume what I have ſaid or hinted already; the neceſſary conſequences of protracting the war in order to dethrone PHILIP, from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven incluſively, could be no other than theſe: our deſign of penetrating into France might have been defeated, and have become fatal to us by a reverſe of fortune: our firſt ſucceſs might not have obliged the French to ſubmit; and we might have had France to conquer, after we had failed in our firſt attempt to conquer Spain, and even in order to proceed to a ſecond: the French might have ſubmitted, and the Spaniards not; and whilſt the former had been employed to force the latter, according to the ſcheme of the allies; or whilſt, the latter ſubmitting likewiſe, PHILIP had evacuated Spain, the high allies might have gone together by the ears about dividing the ſpoil, and diſpoſing of the crown of Spain. To theſe iſſues were things brought by protracting the war; by refuſing to make peace, on the principles of the grand alliance at worſt, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; and by refuſing to grant it, even on thoſe of the new plan, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten. Such contingent events as I have mentioned ſtood in proſpect before us. The end of the war was removed out of ſight; and they, who clamored rather than argued for the continuation of it, contented themſelves to affirm, that France was not enough reduced, and that no peace ought to be made as long as a prince of the houſe of Bourbon remained on a Spaniſh throne. When they would think France enough reduced, it was impoſſible to gueſs. Whether they intended to join the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns on the head of CHARLES, who had declared his irrevocable reſolution to continue the war till the conditions inſiſted upon

upon at Gertruydenberg were obtained: whether they intended to beſtow Spain and the Indies on ſome other prince; and how this great alteration in their own plan ſhould be effected by common conſent: how poſſeſſion ſhould be given to CHARLES, or any other prince, not only of Spain but of all the Spaniſh dominions out of Europe, where the attachment to PHILIP was at leaſt as ſtrong as in Caſtile, and where it would not be ſo eaſy, the diſtance and extent of theſe dominions conſidered, to oblige the Spaniards to ſubmit to another government: Theſe points, and many more equally neceſſary to be determined, and equally difficult to prepare, were neither determined nor prepared; ſo that we were reduced to carry on the war, after the death of the emperor JOSEPH, without any poſitive ſcheme agreed to, as the ſcheme of the future peace, by the allies. That of the grand alliance we had long before renounced. That of the new plan was become ineligible; and, if it had been eligible, it would have been impracticable, becauſe of the diviſion it would have created among the allies themſelves: ſeveral of whom would not have conſented, notwithſtanding his irrevocable reſolution, that the emperor ſhould be king of Spain. I know not what part the protracters of the war, in the depth of their policy, intended to take. Our nation had contributed, and acted ſo long under the direction of their councils, for the grandeur of the houſe of Auſtria, like one of the hereditary kingdoms uſurped by that family, that it is lawful to think their intention might be to unite the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns. But I rather think they had no very determinate view, beyond that of continuing the war as long as they could. The late lord OXFORD told me, that my lord SOMERS being preſſed, I know not on what occaſion nor by whom, on the unneceſſary and ruinous continuation of the war; inſtead of giving reaſons to ſhew the neceſſity of it, contented himſelf

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to reply, that he had been bred up in a hatred of France. This was a ſtrange reply for a wiſe man: and yet I know not whether he could have given a better then, or whether any of his pupils could give a better now.

THE whig party in general acquired great and juſt popularity, in the reign of our CHARLES the ſecond, by the clamor they raiſed againſt the conduct of that prince in foreign affairs. They who ſucceeded to the name rather than the principles of this party, after the revolution, and who have had the adminiſtration of the government in their hands with very little interruption ever ſince, pretending to act on the ſame principle, have run into an extreme as vicious and as contrary to all the rules of good policy, as that which their predeceſſors exclaimed againſt. The old whigs complained of the inglorious figure we made, whilſt our court was the bubble, and our king the penſioner of France; and inſiſted that the growing ambition and power of LEWIS the fourteenth ſhould be oppoſed in time. The modern whigs boaſted, and ſtill boaſt, of the glorious figure we made, whilſt we reduced ourſelves, by their councils, and under their adminiſtrations, to be the bubbles of our penſioners, that is of our allies: and whilſt we meaſured our efforts in war, and the continuation of them, without any regard to the intereſts and abilities of our own country, without a juſt and ſober regard, ſuch an one as contemplates objects in their true light and ſees them in their true magnitude, to the general ſyſtem of power in Europe; and, in ſhort, with a principal regard merely to particular intereſts at home and abroad. I ſay at home and abroad; becauſe it is not leſs true, that they have ſacrificed the wealth of their country to the forming and maintaining a party at home, than that they have done ſo to the forming and maintaining, beyond all pretences of neceſſity, alliances

abroad. Theſe general aſſertions may be eaſily juſtified without having recourſe to private anecdotes, as your lordſhip will find when you conſider the whole ſeries of our conduct in the two wars; in that which preceded, and that which ſucceeded immediately the beginning of the preſent century, but above all in the laſt of them. In the adminiſtrations that preceded the revolution, trade had floriſhed, and our nation had grown opulent: but the general intereſt of Europe had been too much neglected by us; and ſlavery, under the umbrage of prerogative, had been well-nigh eſtabliſhed among us. In thoſe that have followed, taxes upon taxes, and debts upon debts, have been perpetually accumulated, till a ſmall number of families have grown into immenſe wealth, and national beggary has been brought upon us; under the ſpecious pretences of ſupporting a common cauſe againſt France, reducing her exorbitant power, and poiſing that of Europe more equally in the public balance: laudable deſigns no doubt, as far as they were real, but ſuch as, being converted into mere pretences, have been productive of much evil; ſome of which we feel and have long felt, and ſome will extend it's conſequences to our lateſt poſterity. The reign of prerogative was ſhort: and the evils and the dangers, to which we were expoſed by it, ended with it. But the reign of falſe and ſquandering policy has laſted long, it laſts ſtill, and will finally complete our ruin. Beggary has been the conſequence of ſlavery in ſome countries: ſlavery will be probably the conſequence of beggary in ours; and if it is ſo, we know at whoſe door to lay it. If we had finiſhed the war in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, we ſhould have reconciled, like a wiſe people, our foreign and our domeſtic intereſts as nearly as poſſible: we ſhould have ſecured the former ſufficiently, and not have ſacrificed the latter as entirely as we did by the proſecution of the war afterwards. You will not be able

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to ſee without aſtoniſhment, how the charge of the war increaſed yearly upon us from the beginning of it; nor how immenſe a ſum we paid in the courſe of it to ſupply the deficiencies of our confederates. Your aſtoniſhment, and indignation too, will increaſe when you come to compare the progreſs that was made from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix excluſively, with the expence of more than thirty millions, I do not exaggerate tho I write upon memory, that this progreſs coſt us to the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven incluſively. Upon this view your lordſhip will be perſuaded that it was high time to take the reſolution of making peace, when the queen thought fit to change her miniſtry towards the end of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten. It was high time indeed to ſave our country from abſolute inſolvency and bankruptcy, by putting an end to a ſcheme of conduct, which the prejudices of a party, the whimſy of ſome particular men, the private intereſt of more, and the ambition and avarice of our allies, who had been invited as it were to a ſcramble by the preliminaries of one thouſand ſeven hnndred and nine, alone maintained. The perſons therefore, who came into power at this time, hearkened, and they did well to hearken, to the firſt overtures that were made them. The diſpoſition of their enemies invited them to do ſo, but that of their friends, and that of a party at home who had nurſed, and been nurſed by the war, might have deterred them from it; for the difficulties and dangers, to which they muſt be expoſed in carrying forward this great work, could eſcape none of them. In a letter to a friend it may be allowed me to ſay, that they did not eſcape me: and that I foreſaw, as contingent but not improbable events, a good part of what has happened to me ſince. Tho it was a duty therefore that we owed to our country, to deliver her from the neceſſity of bearing any longer ſo unequal a part in

ſo unneceſſary a war, yet was there ſome degree of merit in performing it. I think ſo ſtrongly in this manner, I am ſo incorrigible, my lord, that if I could be placed in the ſame circumſtances again, I would take the ſame reſolution, and act the ſame part. Age and experience might enable me to act with more ability, and greater ſkill; but all I have ſuffered ſince the death of the queen ſhould not hinder me from acting. Notwithſtanding this, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed if you think that the peace of Utrecht was not anſwerable to the ſucceſs of the war, nor to the efforts made in it. I think ſo myſelf, and have always owned, even when it was making and made, that I thought ſo. Since we had committed a ſucceſsful folly, we ought to have reaped more advantage from it than we did: and, whether we had left PHILIP, or placed another prince on the throne of Spain, we ought to have reduced the power of France, and to have ſtrengthened her neighbors, much more than we did. We ought to have reduced her power for generations to come, and not to have contented ourſelves with a momentary reduction of it France was exhauſted to a great degree of men and money, and her government had no credit: but they, who took this for a ſufficient reduction of her power, looked but a little way before them, and reaſoned too ſuperficially. Several ſuch there were however; for as it has been ſaid, that there is no extravagancy which ſome philoſopher or other has not maintained, ſo your experience, young as you are, muſt have ſhewn you, that there is no abſurd extreme, into which our party-politicians of Great Britain are not prone to fall, concerning the ſtate and conduct of public affairs. But if France was exhauſted; ſo were we, and ſo were the Dutch. Famine rendered her condition much more miſerable than ours, at one time, in appearance and in reality too. But as ſoon as this accident, that had diſtreſſed the French and frightened LEWIS the fourteenth

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to the utmoſt degree, and the immediate conſequences of it were over; it was obvious to obſerve, tho few made the obſervation, that whilſt we were unable to raiſe in a year, by ſome millions at leaſt, the expences of the year, the French were willing and able to bear the impoſition of the tenth, over and above all the other taxes that had been laid upon them. This obſervation had the weight it deſerved; and ſurely it deſerved to have ſome among thoſe who made it, at the time ſpoken of, and who did not think that the war was to be continued as long as a parliament could be prevailed on to vote money. But ſuppoſing it to have deſerved none, ſuppoſing the power of France to have been reduced as low as you pleaſe, with reſpect to her inward ſtate; yet ſtill I affirm, that ſuch a reduction could not be permanent, and was not therefore ſufficient. Whoever knows the nature of her government, the temper of her people, and the natural advantages ſhe has in commerce over all the nations that ſurround her, knows that an arbitrary government, and the temper of her people enable her on particular occaſions to throw off a load of debt much more eaſily, and with conſequences much leſs to be feared, than any of her neighbors can: that altho in the general courſe of things, trade be cramped and induſtry vexed by this arbitrary government, yet neither one nor the other is oppreſſed; and the temper of the people, and the natural advantages of the country, are ſuch, that how great ſoever her diſtreſs be at any point of time, twenty years of tranquillity ſuffice to re-eſtabliſh her affairs, and to enrich her again at the expence of all the nations of Europe. If any one doubts of this, let him conſider the condition in which this kingdom was left by LEWIS the fourteenth; the ſtrange pranks the late duke of ORLEANS played, during his regency and adminiſtration, with the whole ſyſtem of public revenue, and private property: and then let him tell himſelf, that the revenues of

France, the tenth taken off, exceed all the expences of her government by many millions of livres already, and will exceed them by many more in another year.

Upon the whole matter, my lord, the low and exhauſted ſtate to which France was reduced, by the laſt great war, was but a momentary reduction of her power; and whatever real and more laſting reduction the treaty of Utrecht brought about in ſome inſtances, it was not ſufficient. The power of France would not have appeared as great as it did, when England and Holland armed themſelves and armed all Germany againſt her, if ſhe had lain as open to the invaſions of her enemies, as her enemies lay to her's. Her inward ſtrength was great; but the ſtrength of thoſe frontiers which Lewis the fourteenth was almoſt forty years in forming, and which the folly of all his neighbors in their turns ſuffered him to form, made this ſtrength as formidable as it became. The true reduction of the exorbitant power of France, I take no notice of chimerical projects about changing her government, conſiſted therefore in diſarming her frontiers, and fortifying the barriers againſt her, by the ceſſion and demolition of many more places than ſhe yielded up at Utrecht; but not of more than ſhe might have been obliged to ſacrifice to her own immediate relief, and to the future ſecurity of her neighbors. That ſhe was not obliged to make theſe ſacrifices, I affirm, was owing ſolely to thoſe who oppoſed the peace: and I am willing to put my whole credit with your lordſhip, and the whole merits of a cauſe that has been ſo much conteſted, on this iſſue. I ſay a cauſe that has been ſo much conteſted; for in truth, I think, it is no longer a doubt any where, except in Britiſh pamphlets, whether the conduct of thoſe who neither declined treating, as was done in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; nor pretended to treat without a deſign of concluding,

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as was done in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine and ten, but carried the great work of the peace forward to its conſummation; or the conduct of thoſe who oppoſed this work in every ſtep of its progreſs, ſaved the power of France from a greater and a ſufficient reduction at the treaty of Utrecht. The very miniſters who were employed in this fatal oppoſition, are obliged to confeſs this truth How ſhould they deny it? Thoſe of Vienna may complain that the emperor had not the entire Spaniſh monarchy, or thoſe of Holland that the States were not made maſters directly and indirectly of the whole Low Countries. But neither they, nor any one elſe that has any ſenſe of ſhame about him, can deny that the late queen, tho ſhe was reſolved to treat becauſe ſhe was reſolved to finiſh the war, yet was to the utmoſt degree deſirous to treat in a perfect union with her allies, and to procure them all the reaſonable terms they could expect; and much better than thoſe they reduced themſelves to the neceſſity of accepting, by endeavoring to wreſt the negotiation out of her hands. The diſunion of the allies gave France the advantages ſhe improved. The ſole queſtion is, Who cauſed this diſunion? and that will be eaſily decided by every impartial man, who informs himſelf carefully of the public anecdotes of that time. If the private anecdotes were to be laid open as well as thoſe, and I think it almoſt time they ſhould, the whole monſtrous ſcene would appear, and ſhock the eye of every honeſt man. I do not intend to deſcend into many particulars at this time: but whenever I, or any other perſon as well informed as I, ſhall deſcend into a full deduction of ſuch particulars, it will become undeniably evident, that the moſt violent oppoſition imaginable, carried on by the Germans and the Dutch in league with a party in Britain, began as ſoon as the firſt overtures were made to the queen; before ſhe had ſo much as begun to treat: and was therefore an oppoſition not to this

that plan of treaty, but in truth to all treaty; and eſpecially to one wherein Great Britain took the lead, or was to have any particular advantage. That the Imperialiſts meant no treaty, unleſs a preliminary and impracticable condition of it was to ſet the crown of Spain on the emperor's head, will appear from this; that prince EUGENE, when he came into England, long after the death of JOSEPH and elevation of CHARLES, upon an errand moſt unworthy of ſo great a man, treated always on this ſuppoſition: and I remember with how much inward impatience I aſſiſted at conferences held with him concerning quotas for renewing the war in Spain, in the very ſame room, at the Cockpit, where the queen's miniſters had been told in plain terms, a little before, by thoſe of other allies, "that their maſters would not conſent that the Imperial and "Spaniſh crowns ſhould unite on the ſame head." That the Dutch were not averſe to all treaty, but meant none wherein Great Britain was to have any particular advantage, will appear from this; that their miniſter declared himſelf ready and authoriſed to ſtop the oppoſition made to the queen's meaſures, by preſenting a memorial, wherein he would declare, "that "his maſters entered into them, and were reſolved not to "continue the war for the recovery of Spain, provided the "queen would conſent that they ſhould garriſon Gibraltar "and Portmahon jointly with us, and ſhare equally the Aſ-"ſiento, the South Sea ſhip, and whatever ſhould be granted "by the Spaniards to the queen and her ſubjects." That the whigs engaged in this league with foreign powers againſt their country, as well as their queen, and with a phrenſy more unaccountable than that which made and maintained the ſolemn league and covenant formerly, will appear from this; that their attempts were directed not only to wreſt the negotiations out of the queen's hands, but to oblige their country to carry on the war, on the ſame unequal foot that had coſt her

her already about twenty millions more than ſhe ought to have contributed to it. For they not only continued to abet the emperor, whoſe inability to ſupply his quota was confeſſed; but the Dutch likewiſe, after the States had refuſed to ratify the treaty their miniſter ſigned at London towards the end of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven, and by which the queen united herſelf more cloſely than ever to them; engaging to purſue the war, to conclude the peace, and to guaranty it, when concluded, jointly with them; "provided they would keep the engagements they had taken "with her, and the conditions of proportionate expence un-"der which our nation had entered into the war." Upon ſuch ſchemes as theſe was the oppoſition to the treaty of Utrecht carried on: and the means employed, and the means projected to be employed, were worthy of ſuch ſchemes; open, direct, and indecent defiance of legal authority, ſecret conſpiracies againſt the ſtate, and baſe machinations againſt particular men, who had no other crime than that of endeavouring to conclude a war, under the authority of the queen, which a party in the nation endeavored to prolong againſt her authority. Had the good policy of concluding the war been doubtful, it was certainly as lawful for thoſe, who thought it good, to adviſe it, as it had been for thoſe who thought it bad, to adviſe the contrary: and the deciſion of the ſovereign on the throne ought to have terminated the conteſt. But he who had judged by the appearances of things on one ſide, at that time, would have been apt to think, that putting an end to the war, or to Magna Charta, was the ſame thing; that the queen on the throne had no right to govern independently of her ſucceſſor; nor any of her ſubjects a right to adminiſter the government under her, tho called to it by her, except thoſe whom ſhe had thought fit to lay aſide. Extravagant as theſe principles are, no other could juſtify the conduct held

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at that time by thoſe who oppoſed the peace: and as I ſaid juſt now, that the phrenſy of this league was more unaccountable than that of the ſolemn league and covenant, I might have added, that it was not very many degrees leſs criminal. Some of thoſe, who charged the queen's miniſters, after her death, with imaginary treaſons, had been guilty during her life of real treaſons: and I can compare the folly and violence of the ſpirit that prevailed at that time, both before the concluſion of the peace, and, under pretence of danger to the ſucceſſion, after it, to nothing more nearly than to the folly and violence of the ſpirit that ſeiſed the tories ſoon after the acceſſion of George the firſt. The latter indeed, which was provoked by unjuſt and impolitic perſecution, broke out in open rebellion. The former might have done ſo, if the queen had lived a little longer. But to return.

The obſtinate adherence of the Dutch to this league, in oppoſition to the queen, rendered the conferences of Utrecht, when they were opened, no better than mock conferences. Had the men who governed that commonwealth been wiſe and honeſt enough to unite, at leaſt then, cordially with the queen, and, ſince they could not hinder a congreſs, to act in concert with her in it; we ſhould have been ſtill in time to maintain a ſufficient union among the allies, and a ſufficient ſuperiority over the French. All the ſpecific demands that the former made, as well as the Dutch themſelves, either to incumber the negotiation, or to have in reſerve, according to the artifice uſually employed on ſuch occaſions, certain points from which to depart in the courſe of it with advantage, would not have been obtained: but all the eſſential demands, all in particular that were really neceſſary to ſecure the barriers in the Low Countries and of the four circles againſt France, would have been ſo. For France muſt have continued, in this

this caſe, rather to ſue for peace, than to treat on an equal foot. The firſt dauphin, ſon of LEWIS the fourteenth, died ſeveral months before this congreſs began: the ſecond dauphin, his grandſon, and the wife and the eldeſt ſon of this prince, died, ſoon after it began, of the ſame unknown diſtemper, and were buried together in the ſame grave. Such family misfortunes, following a long ſeries of national misfortunes, made the old king, tho he bore them with much ſeeming magnanimity, deſirous to get out of the war at any tolerable rate, that he might not run the riſque of leaving a child of five years old, the preſent king, engaged in it. The queen did all that was morally poſſible, except giving up her honor in the negotiation, and the intereſts of her ſubjects in the conditions of peace, to procure this union with the States General. But all ſhe could do was vain; and the ſame phrenſy that had hindered the Dutch from improving to their and to the common advantage the public misfortunes of France, hindered them from improving to the ſame purpoſes the private misfortunes of the houſe of Bourbon. They continued to flatter themſelves that they ſhould force the queen out of her meaſures, by their intrigues with the party in Britain who oppoſed theſe meaſures, and even raiſe an inſurrection againſt her. But theſe intrigues, and thoſe of prince EUGENE, were known and diſappointed; and monſieur BUYS had the mortification to be reproached with them publicly, when he came to take leave of the lords of the council, by the earl of OXFORD; who entered into many particulars that could not be denied, of the private tranſactions of this ſort, to which BUYS had been a party, in compliance with his inſtructions, and, as I believe, much againſt his own ſenſe and inclinations. As the ſeaſon for taking the field advanced, the league propoſed to defeat the ſucceſs of the congreſs by the events of the campaign. But inſtead of defeating the ſucceſs of the congreſs, the events

of the campaign ſerved only to turn this ſucceſs in favor of France. At the beginning of the year, the queen, and the States, in concert, might have given the law to friend and foe, with great advantage to the former; and with ſuch a detriment to the latter, as the cauſes of the war rendered juſt, the events of it reaſonable, and the objects of it neceſſary. At the end of the year, the allies were no longer in a ſtate of giving, nor the French of receiving the law; and the Dutch had recourſe to the queen's good offices, when they could oppoſe and durſt inſult her no longer. Even then, theſe offices were employed with zeal, and with ſome effect, for them.

THUS the war ended, much more favorably to France than ſhe expected, or they who put an end to it deſigned. The queen would have humbled and weakened this power. The allies who oppoſed her would have cruſhed it, and have raiſed another as exorbitant on the ruins of it. Neither one nor the other ſucceeded, and they who meant to ruin the French power preſerved it, by oppoſing thoſe who meant to reduce it.

SINCE I have mentioned the events of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, and the deciſive turn they gave to the negotiations in favor of France, give me leave to ſay ſomething more on this ſubject. You will find that I ſhall do ſo with much impartiality. The diſaſtrous events of this campaign in the Low Countries, and the conſequences of them, have been imputed to the ſeparation of the Britiſh troops from the army of the allies. The clamor againſt this meaſure was great at that time, and the prejudices which this clamor raiſed are great ſtill among ſome men. But as clamor raiſed theſe prejudices, other prejudices gave birth to this clamor: and

and it is no wonder they ſhould do ſo among perſons bent on continuing the war; ſince I own very freely, that when the firſt ſtep that led to this ſeparation came to my knowledge, which was not an hour, by the way, before I writ by the queen's order to the duke of ORMOND, in the very words in which the order was adviſed and given, "that he ſhould "not engage in any ſiege, nor hazard a battle, till further "order," I was ſurpriſed and hurt. So much, that if I had had an opportunity of ſpeaking in private to the queen, after I had received monſieur DE TORCY's letter to me on the ſubject, and before ſhe went into the council, I ſhould have ſpoken to her, I think, in the firſt heat, againſt it. The truth is, however, that the ſtep was juſtifiable at that point of time in every reſpect, and therefore that the conſequences are to be charged to the account of thoſe who drew them on themſelves, not to the account of the queen, nor of the miniſter who adviſed her. The ſtep was juſtifiable to the allies ſurely, ſince the queen took no more upon her, no not ſo much by far, in making it, as many of them had done by ſuſpending, or endangering, or defeating operations in the heat of the war, when they declined to ſend their troops, or delayed the march of them, or neglected the preparations they were obliged to make, on the moſt frivolous pretences. Your lordſhip will find in the courſe of your enquiries many particular inſtances of what is here pointed out in general. But I cannot help deſcending into ſome few of thoſe that regard the emperor and the States General, who cried the loudeſt and with the moſt effect, tho they had the leaſt reaſon, on account of their own conduct, to complain of the queen's. With what face could the emperor, for inſtance, preſume to complain of the orders ſent to the duke of ORMOND? I ſay nothing of his deficiencies, which were ſo great, that he had at this very time little more than one regiment that could be ſaid properly to act

againſt France and Spain at his ſole charge; as I affirmed to prince EUGENE before the lords of the council, and demonſtrated upon paper the next day. I ſay nothing of all that preceded the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeven, on which I ſhould have much to ſay. But I deſire your lordſhip only to conſider, what you will find to have paſſed after the famous year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. Was it with the queen's approbation, or againſt her will, that the emperor made the treaty for the evacuation of Lombardy, and let out ſo great a number of French regiments time enough to recruit themſelves at home, to march into Spain, and to deſtroy the Britiſh forces at Almanza? Was it with her approbation, or againſt her will, that, inſtead of employing all his forces and all his endeavors, to make the greateſt deſign of the whole war, the enterpriſe on Toulon, ſucceed, he detached twelve thouſand men to reduce the kingdom of Naples, that muſt have fallen of courſe? and that an opportunity of ruining the whole maritime force of France, and of ruining or ſubduing her provinces on that ſide, was loſt, merely by this unneceſſary diverſion, and by the conduct of prince EUGENE, which left no room to doubt that he gave occaſion to this fatal diſappointment on purpoſe, and in concert with the court of Vienna?

TURN your eyes, my lord, on the conduct of the States, and you will find reaſon to be aſtoniſhed at the arrogance of the men who governed in them at this time, and who preſumed to exclaim againſt a queen of Great Britain, for doing what their deputies had done more than once in that very country, and in the courſe of that very war. In the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, at the latter end of a war, when conferences for treating a peace were opened, when the leaſt ſiniſter event in the field would take off from that ſuperiority

riority which the allies had in the congreſs, and when the paſt ſucceſs of the war had already given them as much of this ſuperiority as they wanted to obtain a ſafe, advantageous, honorable, and laſting peace, the queen directed her general to ſuſpend till further order the operations of her troops. In one thouſand ſeven hundred and three, in the beginning of a war when ſomething was to be riſqued or no ſucceſs to be expected, and when the bad ſituation of affairs in Germany and Italy required, in a particular manner, that efforts ſhould be made in the Low Countries, and that the war ſhould not languiſh there whilſt it was unſucceſsful every where elſe; the duke of MARLBOROUGH determined to attack the French, but the Dutch deputies would not ſuffer their troops to go on; defeated his deſign in the very moment of it's execution, if I remember well, and gave no other reaſon for their proceeding than that which is a reaſon againſt every battle, the poſſibility of being beaten. The circumſtance of proximity to their frontier was urged, I know, and it was ſaid, that their provinces would be expoſed to the incurſions of the French if they loſt the battle. But beſides other anſwers to this vain pretence, it was obvious that they had ventured battles as near home as this would have been fought, and that the way remove the enemy farther off was by action, not inaction. Upon the whole matter; the Dutch deputies ſtopped the progreſs of the confederate army at this time, by exerciſing an arbitrary and independent authority over the troops of the States. In one thouſand ſeven hundred and five, when the ſucceſs of the preceding campaign ſhould have given them an entire confidence in the duke of MARLBOROUGH's conduct, when returning from the Moſelle to the Low Countries, he began to make himſelf and the common cauſe amends, for the diſappointment which pique and jealouſy in the prince of BADEN, or uſual ſloth and negligence in the

Germans,

Germans, had occaſioned juſt before, by forcing the French lines; when he was in the full purſuit of this advantage, and when he was marching to attack an enemy half defeated, and more than half diſpirited; nay when he had made his diſpoſitions for attacking, and part of his troops had paſſed the Dyle ----the deputies of the States once more tied up his hands, took from him an opportunity too fair to be loſt; for theſe, I think, were ſome of the terms of his complaint: and in ſhort the confederacy received an affront at leaſt, where we might have obtained a victory. Let this that has been ſaid ſerve as a ſpecimen of the independency on the queen, her councils, and her generals, with which theſe powers acted in the courſe of the war; who were not aſhamed to find fault that the queen, once, and at the latter end of it, preſumed to ſuſpend the operations of her troops till farther order. But be it that they foreſaw what this farther order would be. They foreſaw then, that as ſoon as Dunkirk ſhould be put into the queen's hands, ſhe would conſent to a ſuſpenſion of arms for two months, and invite them to do the ſame. Neither this foreſight, nor the ſtrong declaration which the biſhop of BRISTOL made by the queen's order at Utrecht, and which ſhewed them that her reſolution was taken not to ſubmit to the league into which they had entered againſt her, could prevail on them to make a right uſe of theſe two months, by endeavoring to renew their union and good underſtanding with the queen; tho I can ſay with the greateſt truth, and they could not doubt of it at the time, that ſhe would have gone more than half-way to meet them, and that her miniſters would have done their utmoſt to bring it about. Even then we might have reſumed the ſuperiority we began to loſe in the congreſs; for, the queen and the States uniting, the principal allies would have united with them: and, in this caſe, it would have been ſo much the intereſt of France to avoid

avoid any chance of ſeeing the war renewed, that ſhe muſt, and ſhe would, have made ſure of peace, during the ſuſpenſion, on much worſe terms for herſelf and for Spain, than ſhe made it afterwards. But the prudent and ſober ſtates continued to act like froward children, or like men drunk with reſentment and paſſion; and ſuch will the conduct be of the wiſeſt governments in every circumſtance, where a ſpirit of faction and of private intereſt prevails, among thoſe who are at the head, over reaſon of ſtate. After laying aſide all decency in their behavior towards the queen, they laid aſide all caution for themſelves. They declared "they would carry "on the war without her." Landrecy ſeemed, in their eſteem, of more importance than Dunkirk; and the opportunity of waſting ſome French provinces, or of putting the whole event of the war on the deciſion of another battle, preferable to the other meaſure that lay open to them; that, I mean, of trying, in good earneſt, and in an honeſt concert with the queen, during the ſuſpenſion of arms, whether ſuch terms of peace, as ought to ſatisfy them and the other allies, might not be impoſed on France.

IF the confederate army had broke into France, the campaign before this, or in any former campaign; and if the Germans and the Dutch had exerciſed then the ſame inhumanity, as the French had exerciſed in their provinces in former wars; if they had burnt Verſailles, and even Paris, and if they had diſturbed the aſhes of the dead princes that repoſe at Saint Denis, every good man would have felt the horror, that ſuch cruelties inſpire: no man could have ſaid that the retaliation was unjuſt. But in one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, it was too late, in every reſpect, to meditate ſuch projects. If the French had been unprepared to defend their frontier, either for want of means, or in a vain confidence that

that the peace would be made, as our king CHARLES the ſecond was unprepared to defend his coaſt at the latter end of his firſt war with Holland, the allies might have played a ſure game in ſatisfying their vengeance on the French, as the Dutch did on us in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven; and impoſing harder terms on them, than thoſe they offered, or would have accepted. But this was not the caſe. The French army was, I believe, more numerous than the army of the allies, even before ſeparation, and certainly in much a better condition than two or three years before, when a deluge of blood was ſpilt to diſlodge them, for we did no more, at Malplaquet. Would the Germans and the Dutch have found it more eaſy to force them at this time, than it was at that? Would not the French have fought with as much obſtinacy to ſave Paris, as they did to ſave Mons? and, with all the regard due to the duke of ORMOND and to prince EUGENE, was the abſence of the duke of MARLBOROUGH of no conſequence? Turn this affair every way in your thoughts, my lord, and you will find that the Germans and the Dutch had nothing in theirs, but to break, at any rate, and at any riſque, the negotiations that were begun, and to reduce Great Britain to the neceſſity of continuing, what ſhe had been too long, a province of the confederacy. A province indeed, and not one of the beſt treated; ſince the confederates aſſumed a right of obliging her to keep her pacts with them, and of diſpenſing with their obligations to her; of exhauſting her, without rule, or proportion, or meaſure, in the ſupport of a war, to which ſhe alone contributed more than all of them, and in which ſhe had no longer an immediate intereſt, nor even any remote intereſt that was not common, or with reſpect to her, very dubious; and, after all this, of complaining that the queen preſumed to hearken to overtures of peace, and to ſet a negotiation on foot, whilſt their humor and ambition

tion required that the war ſhould be prolonged for an indefinite time, and for a purpoſe that was either bad or indeterminate.

THE ſuſpenſion of arms, that began in the Low Countries, was continued, and extended afterwards by the act I ſigned at Fontainebleau. The fortune of the war turned at the ſame time: and all thoſe diſgraces followed, which obliged the Dutch to treat, and to deſire the aſſiſtance of the queen, whom they had ſet at defiance ſo lately. This aſſiſtance they had, as effectually as it could be given in the circumſtances, to which they had reduced themſelves, and the whole alliance: and the peace of Great Britain, Portugal, Savoy, Pruſſia, and the States General, was made, without his imperial majeſty's concurrence, in the ſpring of one thouſand ſeven hundred and thirteen; as it might have been made, much more advantageouſly for them all, in that of one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve. Leſs obſtinacy on the part of the States, and perhaps more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen, would have wound up all theſe divided threads in one, and have finiſhed this great work much ſooner and better. I ſay, perhaps more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen; becauſe altho I think that I ſhould have conveyed her orders for ſigning a treaty of peace with France, before the armies took the field, much more willingly, than I executed them afterwards in ſigning that of the ceſſation of arms; yet I do not preſume to decide, but ſhall deſire your lordſhip to do ſo, on a review of all circumſtances, ſome of which I ſhall juſt mention.

THE league made for protracting the war having oppoſed the queen to the utmoſt of their power, and by means of every ſort, from the firſt appearances of a negotiation; the general

effect, of this violent oppoſition, on her and her miniſters was, to make them proceed by ſlower and more cautious ſteps: the particular effect of it was, to oblige them to open the eyes of the nation, and to inflame the people with a deſire of peace, by ſhewing, in the moſt public and ſolemn manner, how unequally we were burdened, and how unfairly we were treated by our allies. The firſt gave an air of diffidence and timidity to their conduct, which encouraged the league, and gave vigor to the oppoſition. The ſecond irritated the Dutch particularly; for the emperor and the other allies had the modeſty at leaſt not to pretend to bear any proportion in the expence of the war: and thus the two powers, whoſe union was the moſt eſſential, were the moſt at variance, and the queen was obliged to act in a cloſer concert with her enemy who deſired peace, than ſhe would have done if her allies had been leſs obſtinately bent to protract the war. During theſe tranſactions, my lord OXFORD, who had his correſpondencies apart, and a private thread of negotiation always in his hands, entertained hopes that PHILIP would be brought to abandon Spain in favor of his father-in-law, and to content himſelf with the ſtates of that prince, the kingdom of Sicily, and the preſervation of his right of ſucceſſion to the crown of France. Whether my lord had any particular reaſons for entertaining theſe hopes, beſide the general reaſons founded on the condition of France, on that of the Bourbon family, and on the diſpoſition of LEWIS the fourteenth, I doubt very much. That LEWIS, who ſought, and had need of ſeeking peace, almoſt at any rate, and who ſaw that he could not obtain it, even of the queen, unleſs PHILIP abandoned immediately the crown of Spain, or abandoned immediately, by renunciation and a ſolemn act of excluſion, all pretenſion to that of France; that LEWIS was deſirous of the former, I cannot doubt. That PHILIP would have abandoned Spain, with the equiva-

lents that have been mentioned, or either of them, I believe likewiſe; if the preſent king of FRANCE had died, when his father, mother, and eldeſt brother did: for they all had the ſame diſtemper. But LEWIS would uſe no violent means to force his grandſon; the queen would not continue the war to force him; PHILIP was too obſtinate, and his wife too ambitious, to quit the crown of Spain, when they had diſcovered our weakneſs, and felt their own ſtrength in that country, by their ſucceſs in the campaign of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten: after which my lord STANHOPE himſelf was convinced that Spain could not be conquered, nor kept, if it was conquered, without a much greater army, than it was poſſible for us to ſend thither. In that ſituation it was wild to imagine, as the earl of OXFORD imagined, or pretended to imagine, that they would quit the crown of Spain, for a remote and uncertain proſpect of ſucceeding to that of France, and content themſelves to be, in the mean time, princes of very ſmall dominions. PHILIP therefore, after ſtruggling long that he might not be obliged to make his option till the ſucceſſion of France lay open to him, was obliged to make it, and made it, for Spain. Now this, my lord, was the very criſis of the negotiation: and to this point I apply what I ſaid above of the effect of more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen. It was plain, that, if ſhe made the campaign in concert with her allies, ſhe could be no longer miſtreſs of the negotiations, nor have almoſt a chance for conducting them to the iſſue ſhe propoſed. Our ill ſucceſs in the field would have rendered the French leſs tractable in the congreſs: our good ſucceſs there would have rendered the allies ſo. On this principle the queen ſuſpended the operations of her troops, and then concluded the ceſſation.

COMPARE now the appearances and effect of this meaſure, with the appearances and effect that another meaſure would have had. In order to arrive at any peace, it was neceſſary to do what the queen did, or to do more: and, in order to arrive at a good one, it was neceſſary to be prepared to carry on the war, as well as to make a ſhew of it: for ſhe had the hard taſk upon her, of guarding againſt her allies, and her enemies both. But in that ferment, when few men conſidered any thing coolly, the conduct of her general, after he took the field, tho he covered the allies in the ſiege of Queſnoy, correſponded ill, in appearance, with the declarations of carrying on the war vigorouſly, that had been made, on ſeveral occaſions, before the campaign opened. It had an air of double dealing; and as ſuch it paſſed among thoſe, who did not combine in their thoughts all the circumſtances of the conjuncture, or who were infatuated with the notional neceſſity of continuing the war. The clamor could not have been greater, if the queen had ſigned her peace ſeparately: and, I think, the appearances might have been explained as favorably in one caſe, as in the other. From the death of the emperor JOSEPH, it was neither our intereſt, nor the common intereſt, well underſtood, to ſet the crown of Spain on the preſent emperor's head. As ſoon therefore as PHILIP had made his option, and if ſhe had taken this reſolution early, his option would have been ſooner made, I preſume that the queen might have declared, that ſhe would not continue the war an hour longer to procure Spain for his imperial majeſty; that the engagements, ſhe had taken whilſt he was archduke, bound her no more; that, by his acceſſion to the empire, the very nature of them was altered; that ſhe took effectual meaſures to prevent, in any future time, an union of the crowns of France and Spain, and, upon the ſame principle, would not conſent, much leſs fight, to bring about an immediate union of

of the imperial and Spaniſh crowns; that they, who inſiſted to protract the war, intended this union; that they could intend nothing elſe, ſince they ventured to break with her, rather than to treat, and were ſo eager to put the reaſonable ſatisfaction, that they might have in every other caſe without hazard, on the uncertain events of war; that ſhe would not be impoſed on any longer in this manner, and that ſhe had ordered her miniſters to ſign her treaty with France, on the ſurrender of Dunkirk into her hands; that ſhe pretended not to preſcribe to her allies, but that ſhe had inſiſted, in their behalf, on certain conditions, that France was obliged to grant to thoſe of them, who ſhould ſign their treaties at the ſame time as ſhe did, or who ſhould conſent to an immediate ceſſation of arms, and during the ceſſation treat under her mediation. There had been more frankneſs, and more dignity in this proceeding, and the effect muſt have been more advantageous. France would have granted more for a ſeparate peace, than for a ceſſation: and the Dutch would have been more influenced by the proſpect of one, than of the other; eſpecially ſince this proceeding would have been very different from theirs at Munſter, and at Nimeghen, where they abandoned their allies, without any other pretence than the particular advantage they found in doing ſo. A ſuſpenſion of the operations of the queen's troops, nay a ceſſation of arms between her and France, was not definitive; and they might, and they did, hope to drag her back under their, and the German yoke. This therefore was not ſufficient to check their obſtinacy, nor to hinder them from making all the unfortunate haſte they did make to get themſelves beaten at Denain. But they would poſſibly have laid aſide their vain hopes, if they had ſeen the queen's miniſters ready to ſign her treaty of peace, and thoſe of ſome principal allies ready to ſign at the ſame time; in which caſe the miſchief that followed, had been

been prevented, and better terms of peace had been obtained for the confederacy: a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, who could never be king of France, would have ſat on the Spaniſh throne, inſtead of an emperor: the Spaniſh ſcepter would have been weakened in the hands of one, and the imperial ſcepter would have been ſtrengthened in thoſe of the other: France would have had no opportunity of recovering from former blows, nor of finiſhing a long unſucceſsful war by two ſucceſsful campaigns: her ambition, and her power, would have declined with her old king, and under the minority that followed: one of them at leaſt might have been ſo reduced by the terms of peace, if the defeat of the allies in one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, and the loſs of ſo many towns as the French took in that and the following year, had been prevented, that the other would have been no longer formidable, even ſuppoſing it to have continued; whereas I ſuppoſe that the tranquility of Europe is more due, at this time, to want of ambition, than to want of power, on the part of France. But, to carry the compariſon of theſe two meaſures to the end, it may be ſuppoſed that the Dutch would have taken the ſame part, on the queen's declaring a ſeparate peace, as they took on her declaring a ceſſation. The preparations for the campaign in the Low Countries were made; the Dutch, like the other confederates, had a juſt confidence in their own troops, and an unjuſt contempt for thoſe of the enemy; they were tranſported from their uſual ſobriety and caution by the ambitious proſpect of large acquiſitions, which had been opened artfully to them; the reſt of the confederate army was compoſed of imperial and German troops: ſo that the Dutch, the Imperialiſts, and the other Germans, having an intereſt to decide which was no longer the intereſt of the whole confederacy, they might have united againſt the queen in one caſe, as they did in the other; and the miſchief that followed to them

them and the common cauſe, might not have been prevented. This might have been the caſe, no doubt. They might have flattered themſelves that they ſhould be able to break into France, and to force PHILIP, by the diſtreſs brought on his grandfather, to reſign the crown of Spain to the emperor, even after Great Britain, and Portugal, and Savoy too perhaps, were drawn out of the war; for theſe princes deſired as little, as the queen, to ſee the Spaniſh crown on the emperor's head. But, even in this caſe, tho the madneſs would have been greater, the effect would not have been worſe. The queen would have been able to ſerve theſe confederates as well by being mediator in the negotiations, as they left it in her power to do, by being a party in them: and Great Britain would have had the advantage of being delivered ſo much ſooner from a burden, which whimſical and wicked politics had impoſed, and continued upon her till it was become intolerable. Of theſe two meaſures, at the time when we might have taken either, there were perſons who thought the laſt preferable to the former. But it never came into public debate. Indeed it never could; too much time having been loſt in waiting for the option of PHILIP, and the ſuſpenſion and ceſſation having been brought before the council rather as a meaſure taken, than a matter to be debated. If your lordſhip, or any one elſe, ſhould judge, that, in ſuch circumſtances as thoſe of the confederacy in the beginning of one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, the latter meaſure ought to have been taken, and the Gordian knot to have been cut rather than to ſuffer a meek treaty to languiſh on, with ſo much advantage to the French as the diſunion of the allies gave them; in ſhort, if ſlowneſs, perplexity, inconſiſtency, and indeciſion ſhould be objected, in ſome inſtances, to the queen's councils at that time; if it ſhould be ſaid particularly, that ſhe did not obſerve the preciſe moment when the conduct

of

of the league formed againſt her, being expoſed to mankind, would have juſtified any part ſhe ſhould have taken (tho ſhe declared, ſoon after the moment was paſſed, that this conduct had ſet her free from all engagements) and when ſhe ought to have taken that of drawing, by one bold meaſure, her allies out of the war, or herſelf out of the confederacy, before ſhe loſt her influence on France: if all this ſhould be objected, yet would the proofs brought to ſupport theſe objections ſhew, that we were better allies than politicians; that the deſire the queen had to treat in concert with her confederates, and the reſolution ſhe took not to ſign without them, made her bear what no crowned head had ever borne before; and that where ſhe erred, ſhe erred principally by the patience, the compliance, and the condeſcenſion ſhe exerciſed towards them, and towards her own ſubjects in league with them. Such objections as theſe may lie to the queen's conduct, in the courſe of this great affair; as well as objections of human infirmity to that of the perſons employed by her in the tranſactions of it; from which neither thoſe who preceded, nor thoſe who ſucceeded, have, I preſume, been free. But the principles on which they proceeded were honeſt, the means they uſed were lawful, and the event they propoſed to bring about was juſt. Whereas the very foundation of all the oppoſition to the peace was laid in injuſtice and folly: for what could be more unjuſt, than the attempt of the Dutch and the Germans, to force the queen to continue a war for their private intereſt and ambition, the diſproportionate expence of which oppreſſed the commerce of her ſubjects, and loaded them with debts for ages yet to come? a war, the object of which was ſo changed, that from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven ſhe made it not only without any engagement, but againſt her own, and the common intereſt? What could be more fooliſh; you will think that I

ſoften

ſoften the term too much, and you will be in the right to think ſo: what could be more fooliſh, than the attempt of a party in Britain, to protract a war ſo ruinous to their country, without any reaſon that they durſt avow, except that of wreaking the reſentments of Europe on France, and that of uniting the imperial and Spaniſh crowns on an Auſtrian head? one of which was to purchaſe revenge at a price too dear; and the other was to expoſe the liberties of Europe to new dangers, by the concluſion of a war which had been made to aſſert and ſecure them.

I HAVE dwelt the longer on the conduct of thoſe who promoted, and of thoſe who oppoſed, the negotiations of the peace made at Utrecht, and on the compariſon of the meaſure purſued by the queen with that which ſhe might have purſued, becauſe the great benefit we ought to reap from the ſtudy of hiſtory, cannot be reaped unleſs we accuſtom ourſelves to compare the conduct of different governments, and different parties, in the ſame conjunctures, and to obſerve the meaſures they did purſue, and the meaſures they might have purſued, with the actual conſequences that followed one, and the poſſible, or probable conſequences, that might have followed the other. By this exercife of the mind, the ſtudy of hiſtory anticipates, as it were, experience, as I have obſerved in one of the firſt of theſe letters, and prepares us for action. If this conſideration ſhould not plead a ſufficient excuſe for my prolixity on this head, I have one more to add that may. A rage of warring poſſeſſed a party in our nation till the death of the late queen: a rage of negotiating has poſſeſſed the ſame party of men, ever ſince. You have ſeen the conſequences of one: you ſee actually thoſe of the other. The rage of warring confirmed the beggary of our nation, which began as early as the revolution; but then it gave, in the laſt

war, reputation to our arms, and our councils too. For tho I think, and muſt always think, that the principle, on which we acted after departing from that laid down in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one, was wrong; yet muſt we confeſs that it was purſued wiſely, as well as boldly. The rage of negotiating has been a chargeable rage likewiſe, at leaſt as chargeable in its proportion. Far from paying our debts, contracted in war, they continue much the ſame, after three and twenty years of peace. The taxes that oppreſs our mercantile intereſt the moſt are ſtill in mortgage; and thoſe that oppreſs the landed intereſt the moſt, inſtead of being laid on extraordinary occaſions, are become the ordinary funds for the current ſervice of every year. This is grievous, and the more ſo to any man, who has the honor of his country, as well as her proſperity at heart, becauſe we have not, in this caſe, the airy conſolation we had in the other. The rage of negotiating began twenty years ago, under pretence of conſummating the treaty of Utrecht: and, from that time to this, our miniſters have been in one perpetual maze. They have made themſelves and us, often, objects of averſion to the powers on the continent: and we are become at laſt objects of contempt, even to the Spaniards. What other effect could our abſurd conduct have? What other return has it deſerved? We came exhauſted out of long wars; and, inſtead of purſuing the meaſures neceſſary to give us means and opportunity to repair our ſtrength and to diminiſh our burdens, our miniſters have acted, from that time to this, like men who ſought pretences to keep the nation in the ſame exhauſted condition, and under the ſame load of debt. This may have been their view perhaps; and we could not be ſurpriſed if we heard the ſame men declare national poverty neceſſary to ſupport the preſent government, who have ſo frequently declared corruption and a ſtanding army to be

ſo.

ſo. Your good ſenſe, my lord, your virtue, and your love of your country, will always determine you to oppoſe ſuch vile ſchemes, and to contribute your utmoſt towards the cure of both theſe kinds of rage; the rage of warring, without any proportionable intereſt of our own, for the ambition of others; and the rage of negotiating, on every occaſion, at any rate, without a ſufficient call to it, and without any part of that deciding influence which we ought to have. Our nation inhabits an iſland, and is one of the principal nations of Europe; but to maintain this rank, we muſt take the advantages of this ſituation, which have been neglected by us for almoſt half a century: we muſt always remember, that we are not part of the continent, but we muſt never forget that we are neighbors to it. I will conclude, by applying a rule, that HORACE gives for the conduct of an epic or dramatic poem, to the part Great Britain ought to take in the affairs of the continent, if you allow me to transform Britannia into a male divinity, as the verſe requires.

> Nec Deus interſit, niſi dignus vindice nodus
> Inciderit.

If theſe reflections are juſt, and I ſhould not have offered them to your lordſhip had they not appeared both juſt and important to my beſt underſtanding, you will think that I have not ſpent your time unprofitably in making them, and exciting you by them to examine the true intereſt of your country relatively to foreign affairs; and to compare it with thoſe principles of conduct, that, I am perſuaded, have no other foundation than party-deſigns, prejudices, and habits; the private intereſt of ſome men, and the ignorance and raſhneſs of others.

MY letter is grown ſo long that I ſhall ſay nothing to your lordſhip at this time concerning the ſtudy of modern hiſtory, relatively to the intereſts of your country in domeſtic affairs; and I think there will be no need to do ſo at any other. The Hiſtory of the rebellion by your great grandfather, and his private memorials, which your lordſhip has in manuſcript, will guide you ſurely as far as they go: where they leave you, your lordſhip muſt not expect any hiſtory; for we have more reaſon to make this complaint, "abeſt enim hiſtoria litteris noſ-"tris," than TULLY had to put it into the mouth of ATTICUS, his firſt book Of laws. But where hiſtory leaves you, it is wanted leaſt: the traditions of this century, and of the latter end of the laſt, are freſh. Many, who were actors in ſome of theſe events, are alive; and many who have converſed with thoſe that were actors in others. The public is in poſſeſſion of ſeveral collections and memorials, and ſeveral there are in private hands. You will want no materials to form true notions of tranſactions ſo recent. Even pamphlets, writ on different ſides and on different occaſions in our party diſputes, and hiſtories of no more authority than pamphlets, will help you to come at truth. Read them with ſuſpicion, my lord, for they deſerve to be ſuſpected; pay no regard to the epithets given, nor to the judgments paſſed; neglect all declamation, weigh the reaſoning, and advert to fact. With ſuch precautions, even BURNET's hiſtory may be of ſome uſe. In a word, your lordſhip will want no help of mine to diſcover, by what progreſſion the whole conſtitution of our country, and even the character of our nation, has been altered: nor how much a worſe uſe, in a national ſenſe, tho a better in the ſenſe of party politics, the men called Whigs have made of long wars and new ſyſtems of revenue, ſince the revolution; than the men called Tories made, before it, of long peace, and ſtale prerogative. When you look back three or four generations ago,

ago, you will ſee that the Engliſh were a plain, perhaps a rough, but a good-natured hoſpitable people, jealous of their liberties, and able as well as ready to defend them, with their tongues, their pens, and their ſwords. The reſtoration began to turn hoſpitality into luxury, pleaſure into debauch, and country peers and country commoners into courtiers and men of mode. But whilſt our luxury was young, it was little more than elegance: the debauch of that age was enlivened with wit, and varniſhed over with gallantry. The courtiers and the men of mode knew what the conſtitution was, reſpected it, and often aſſerted it. Arts and ſciences floriſhed, and, if we grew more trivial, we were not become either groſly ignorant, or openly profligate. Since the revolution, our kings have been reduced indeed to a ſeeming annual dependance on parliament; but the buſineſs of parliament, which was eſteemed in general a duty before, has been exerciſed in general as a trade ſince. The trade of parliament, and the trade of funds, have grown univerſal. Men, who ſtood forward in the world, have attended to little elſe. The frequency of parliaments, that increaſed their importance, and ſhould have increaſed the reſpect for them, has taken off from their dignity: and the ſpirit that prevailed, whilſt the ſervice in them was duty, has been debaſed ſince it became a trade. Few know, and ſcarce any reſpect, the Britiſh conſtitution: that of the Church has been long ſince derided; that of the State as long neglected; and both have been left at the mercy of the men in power, whoever thoſe men were. Thus the Church, at leaſt the hierarchy, however ſacred in its origin or wiſe in its inſtitution, is become an uſeleſs burden on the State: and the State is become, under ancient and known forms, a new and undefinable monſter; compoſed of a king without monarchical ſplendor, a ſenate of nobles without ariſtocratical independency, and a ſenate of commons without democratical

democratical freedom. In the mean time, my lord, the very idea of wit, and all that can be called taſte, has been loſt among the great; arts and ſciences are ſcarce alive; luxury has been increaſed but not refined; corruption has been eſtabliſhed, and is avowed. When governments are worn out, thus it is: the decay appears in every inſtance. Public and private virtue, public and private ſpirit, ſcience, and wit, decline all together.

THAT you, my lord, may have a long and glorious ſhare in reſtoring all theſe, and in drawing our government back to the true principles of it, I wiſh moſt heartily. Whatever errors I may have committed in public life, I have always loved my country: whatever faults may be objected to me in private life, I have always loved my friend; whatever uſage I have received from my country, it ſhall never make me break with her: whatever uſage I have received from my friends, I never ſhall break with one of them, while I think him a friend to my country. Theſe are the ſentiments of my heart. I know they are thoſe of your lordſhip's: and a communion of ſuch ſentiments is a tye that will engage me to be, as long as I live,

My lord,

Your moſt faithful ſervant.

A PLAN

FOR A

General Hiſtory of EUROPE.

LETTER I.

I SHALL take the liberty of writing to you a little oftener than the three or four times a year, which you tell me, are all you can allow yourſelf to write to thoſe you like beſt: and yet I declare to you with great truth, that you never knew me ſo buſy in your life, as I am at preſent. You muſt not imagine from hence, that I am writing memoirs of myſelf. The ſubject is too ſlight to deſcend to poſterity, in any other manner, than by that occaſional mention which may be made of any little actor in the hiſtory of our age. SYLLA, CAESAR, and others of that rank, were, whilſt they lived, at the head of mankind: their ſtory was in ſome ſort the ſtory of the world, and ſuch as might very properly be tranſmitted under their names to future generations. But for thoſe who have acted much inferior parts, if they publiſh the piece, and call it after their own names, they are impertinent; if they publiſh only their own ſhare in it, they inform mankind by halves, and neither give much inſtruction, nor create much attention.

attention. France abounds with writers of this ſort, and, I think, we fall into the other extreme. Let me tell you, on this occaſion, what has ſometimes come into my thoughts.

THERE is hardly any century in hiſtory which began by opening ſo great a ſcene, as the century wherein we live, and ſhall, I ſuppoſe, die. Compare it with others, even the moſt famous, and you will think ſo. I will ſketch the two laſt, to help your memory.

THE loſs of that balance which LAURENCE of Medicis had preſerved, during his time, in Italy; the expedition of CHARLES the eighth to Naples; the intrigues of the duke of MILAN, who ſpun, with all the refinements of art, that net wherein he was taken at laſt himſelf; the ſucceſsful dexterity of FERDINAND the Catholic, who built one pillar of the Auſtrian greatneſs in Spain, in Italy, and in the Indies; as the ſucceſſion of the houſe of Burgundy, joined to the imperial dignity and the hereditary countries, eſtabliſhed another in the upper and lower Germany: theſe cauſes, and many others, combined to form a very extraordinary conjuncture; and by their conſequences, to render the ſixteenth century fruitful of great events, and of aſtoniſhing revolutions.

THE beginning of the ſeventeenth opened ſtill a greater and more important ſcene. The Spaniſh yoke was well-nigh impoſed on Italy by the famous triumvirate, TOLEDO at Milan, OSSUNA at Naples, and LA CUEVA at Venice. The diſtractions of France, as well as the ſtate-policy of the queen mother, ſeduced by Rome, and amuſed by Spain; the deſpicable character of our JAMES the firſt, the raſhneſs of the elector Palatine, the bad intelligence of the princes and ſtates of the league in Germany, the mercenary temper of JOHN-GEORGE

GEORGE of Saxony, and the great qualities of MAXIMILIAN of Bavaria, raiſed FERDINAND the ſecond to the imperial throne; when, the males of the elder branch of the Auſtrian family in Germany being extinguiſhed at the death of MATTHIAS, nothing was more deſirable, nor perhaps more practicable, than to throw the empire into another houſe. Germany ran the ſame riſque as Italy had done: FERDINAND ſeemed more likely, even than CHARLES the fifth had been, to become abſolute maſter; and, if France had not furniſhed the greateſt miniſter, and the North the greateſt captain, of that age, in the ſame point of time, Vienna and Madrid would have given the law to the weſtern world.

As the Auſtrian ſcale ſunk, that of Bourbon roſe. The true date of the riſe of that power, which has made the kings of France ſo conſiderable in Europe, goes up as high as CHARLES the ſeventh, and LEWIS the eleventh. The weakneſs of our HENRY the ſixth, the looſe conduct of EDWARD the fourth, and perhaps the overſights of HENRY the ſeventh, helped very much to knit that monarchy together, as well as to enlarge it. Advantage might have been taken of the diviſions which religion occaſioned; and ſupporting the proteſtant party in France would have kept that crown under reſtraints, and under inabilities, in ſome meaſure equal to thoſe which were occaſioned antiently by the vaſt alienations of it's demeſnes, and by the exorbitant power of it's vaſſals. But JAMES the firſt was incapable of thinking with ſenſe, or acting with ſpirit. CHARLES the firſt had an imperfect glimpſe of his true intereſt, but his uxorious temper, and the extravagancy of that madman BUCKINGHAM, gave RICHELIEU time to finiſh a great part of his project; and the miſeries that followed in England, gave MAZARIN time and opportunity to

complete the ſyſtem. The laſt great act of this cardinal's adminiſtration was the Pyrenean treaty.

HERE I would begin, by repreſenting the face of Europe ſuch as it was at that epocha, the intereſts and the conduct of England, France, Spain, Holland, and the empire. A ſummary recapitulation ſhould follow of all the ſteps taken by France, during more than twenty years, to arrive at the great object ſhe had propoſed to herſelf in making this treaty: the moſt ſolemn article of which the miniſter, who negotiated it, deſigned ſhould be violated; as appears by his letters, writ from the Iſland of Pheaſants, if I miſtake not. After this, another draught of Europe ſhould have it's place, according to the relations, which the ſeveral powers ſtood in, one towards another, in one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight: and the alterations which the revolution in England made in the politics of Europe. A ſummary account ſhould follow of the events of the war that ended in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety ſeven, with the different views of king WILLIAM the third, and LEWIS the fourteenth, in making the peace of Ryſwic; which matter has been much canvaſſed, and is little underſtood. Then the diſpoſitions made by the partition-treaties, and the influences and conſequences of theſe treaties; and a third draught of the ſtate of Europe at the death of CHARLES the ſecond of Spain. All this would make the ſubject of one or two books, and would be the moſt proper introduction imaginable to an hiſtory of that war with which our century began, and of the peace which followed.

THIS war, foreſeen for above half a century, had been, during all that time, the great and conſtant object of the councils of Europe. The prize to be contended for was the richeſt

eſt that ever had been ſtaked, ſince thoſe of the Perſian and Roman empires. The union of two powers, which ſeparately, and in oppoſition, had aimed at univerſal monarchy, was apprehended. The confederates therefore engaged in it, to maintain a balance between the two houſes of Auſtria and Bourbon, in order to preſerve their ſecurity, and to aſſert their independance. But with the ſucceſs of the war they changed their views: and, if ambition began it on the ſide of France, ambition continued it on the other. The battles, the ſieges, the ſurpriſing revolutions, which happened in the courſe of this war, are not to be paralleled in any period of the ſame compaſs. The motives, and the meaſures, by which it was protracted, the true reaſons why it ended in a manner, which appeared not proportionable to it's ſucceſs; and the new political ſtate, into which Europe was thrown by the treaties of Utrecht and Baden, are ſubjects on which few perſons have the neceſſary informations, and yet every one ſpeaks with aſſurance, and even with paſſion. I think I could ſpeak on them with ſome knowledge, and with as much indifference as POLYBIUS does of the negotiations of his father LYCORTAS, even in thoſe points where I was myſelf an actor.

I WILL even confeſs to you, that I ſhould not deſpair of performing this part better than the former. There is nothing in my opinion ſo hard to execute, as thoſe political maps, if you will allow me ſuch an expreſſion, and thoſe ſyſtems of hints, rather than relations of events, which are neceſſary to connect and explain them; and which muſt be ſo conciſe, and yet ſo full; ſo complicate, and yet ſo clear. I know nothing of this ſort well done by the antients. SALLUST's introduction, as well as that of THUCYDIDES, might ſerve almoſt for any other piece of the Roman or Greek ſtory, as well as for thoſe which theſe two great authors choſe. POLYBIUS does

not come up, in his introduction, to this idea neither. Among the moderns, the firſt book of MACHIAVEL's hiſtory of Florence is a noble original of this kind: and perhaps father PAUL's hiſtory of benefices is, in the ſame kind of compoſition, inimitable.

THESE are a few of thoſe thoughts, which come into my mind when I conſider how incumbent it is on every man, that he ſhould be able to give an account even of his leiſure; and, in the midſt of ſolitude, be of ſome uſe to ſociety.

I KNOW not whether I ſhall have courage enough to undertake the taſk I have chalked out: I diſtruſt my abilities with reaſon, and I ſhall want ſeveral informations, not eaſy, I doubt, for me to obtain. But, in all events, it will not be poſſible for me to go about it this year; the reaſons of which would be long enough to fill another letter, and I doubt that you will think this grown too bulky already.

Adieu.

OF THE

TRUE USE

OF

RETIREMENT and STUDY:

To the Right Honorable

LORD BATHURST.

LETTER II.

SINCE my laſt to your lordſhip, this is the firſt favorable opportunity I have had of keeping the promiſe I made you. I will avoid prolixity, as much as I can, in a firſt draught of my thoughts; but I muſt give you them as they riſe in my mind, without ſtaying to marſhal them in cloſe order.

As proud as we are of human reaſon, nothing can be more abſurd than the general ſyſtem of human life, and human knowledge. This faculty of diſtinguiſhing true from falſe, right from wrong, and what is agreeable, from what is repugnant, to nature,

nature, either by one act, or by a longer proceſs of intuition, has not been given with ſo ſparing an hand, as many appearances would make us apt to believe. If it was cultivated, therefore, as early, and as carefully as it might be, and if the exerciſe of it was left generally as free as it ought to be, our common notions and opinions would be more conſonant to truth than they are: and, truth being but one, they would be more uniform likewiſe.

But this rightful miſtreſs of human life and knowledge, whoſe proper office it is to preſide over both, and to direct us in the conduct of one and the purſuit of the other, becomes degraded in the intellectual oeconomy. She is reduced to a mean and ſervile ſtate, to the vile drudgery of conniving at principles, defending opinions, and confirming habits, that are none of hers. They, who do her moſt honor, who conſult her oftenеſt, and obey her too very often, are ſtill guilty of limiting her authority according to maxims, and rules, and ſchemes, that chance, or ignorance, or intereſt, firſt deviſed, and that cuſtom ſanctifies: cuſtom, that reſult of the paſſions and prejudices of many, and of the deſigns of a few: that ape of reaſon, who uſurps her ſeat, exerciſes her power, and is obeyed by mankind in her ſtead. Men find it eaſy, and government makes it profitable, to concur in eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of ſpeculation and practice: and the whole turn of education prepares them to live upon credit all their lives. Much pains are taken, and time beſtowed, to teach us what to think; but little or none of either, to inſtruct us how to think. The magazine of the memory is ſtored and ſtuffed betimes; but the conduct of the underſtanding is all along neglected, and the free exerciſe of it is, in effect, forbid in all places, and in terms in ſome.

There

THERE is a ſtrange diſtruſt of human reaſon in every human inſtitution: this diſtruſt is ſo apparent, that an habitual ſubmiſſion to ſome authority, or other, is forming in us from our cradles; that principles of reaſoning, and matters of fact, are inculcated in our tender minds, before we are able to exerciſe that reaſon; and that, when we are able to exerciſe it, we are either forbid, or frightened from doing ſo, even on things that are themſelves the proper objects of reaſon, or that are delivered to us upon an authority whoſe ſufficiency or inſufficiency is ſo moſt evidently.

ON many ſubjects, ſuch as the general laws of natural religion, and the general rules of ſociety and good policy, men of all countries and languages, who cultivate their reaſon, judge alike. The ſame premiſes have led them to the ſame concluſions, and ſo, following the ſame guide, they have trod in the ſame path: at leaſt, the differences are ſmall, eaſily reconciled, and ſuch as could not, of themſelves, contradiſtinguiſh nation from nation, religion from religion, and ſect from ſect. How comes it then, that there are other points, on which the moſt oppoſite opinions are entertained, and ſome of theſe with ſo much heat, and fury, that the men on one ſide of the hedge will die for the affirmative, and the men on the other for the negative? "Toute opinion eſt aſſez forte "pour ſe faire épouſer au prix de la vie," ſays MONTAGNE, whom I often quote, as I do SENECA, rather for the ſmartneſs of expreſſion, than the weight or newneſs of matter. Look narrowly into it, and you will find that the points agreed on, and the points diſputed, are not proportionable to the common ſenſe and general reaſon of mankind. Nature and truth are the ſame every where, and reaſon ſhews them every where alike. But the accidental and other cauſes, which give riſe and growth to opinions, both in ſpeculation and practice, are

of

of infinite variety; and where ever theſe opinions are once confirmed by cuſtom and propagated by education, various, inconſiſtent, contradictory as they are, they all pretend (and all their pretences are backed by pride, by paſſion, and by intereſt) to have reaſon, or revelation, or both, on their ſide; tho neither reaſon nor revelation can be poſſibly on the ſide of more than one, and may be poſſibly on the ſide of none.

Thus it happens that the people of Tibet are Tartars and idolaters, that they are Turks and Mahometans at Conſtantinople, Italians and Papiſts at Rome; and how much ſoever education may be leſs confined, and the means of knowledge more attainable, in France and our own country, yet thus it happens in great meaſure that Frenchmen and Roman Catholics are bred at Paris, and Engliſhmen and Proteſtants at London. For men, indeed, properly ſpeaking, are bred no where: every one thinks the ſyſtem, as he ſpeaks the language, of his country; at leaſt there are few that think, and none that act, in any country, according to the dictates of pure unbiaſſed reaſon; unleſs they may be ſaid to do ſo, when reaſon directs them to ſpeak and act according to the ſyſtem of their country, or ſect, at the ſame time as ſhe leads them to think according to that of nature and truth.

Thus the far greateſt part of mankind appears reduced to a lower ſtate than other animals, in that very reſpect, on account of which we claim ſo great ſuperiority over them; becauſe inſtinct, that has it's due effect, is preferable to reaſon that has not. I ſuppoſe in this place, with philoſophers, and the vulgar, that which I am in no wiſe ready to affirm, that other animals have no ſhare of human reaſon: for, let me ſay by the way, it is much more likely other animals ſhould ſhare the human, which is denied, than that man ſhould ſhare the divine

divine reaſon, which is affirmed. But, ſuppoſing our monopoly of reaſon, would not your lordſhip chuſe to walk upon four legs, to wear a long tail, and to be called a beaſt, with the advantage of being determined by irreſiſtible and unerring inſtinct to thoſe truths that are neceſſary to your well-being; rather than to walk on two legs, to wear no tail, and to be honored with the title of man, at the expence of deviating from them perpetually? Inſtinct acts ſpontaneouſly whenever it's action is neceſſary, and directs the animal according to the purpoſe for which it was implanted in him. Reaſon is a nobler and more extenſive faculty; for it extends to the unneceſſary as well as neceſſary, and to ſatisfy our curioſity as well as our wants: but reaſon muſt be excited, or ſhe will remain inactive; ſhe muſt be left free, or ſhe will conduct us wrong, and carry us farther aſtray from her own precincts than we ſhould go without her help: in the firſt caſe, we have no ſufficient guide; and in the ſecond, the more we employ our reaſon, the more unreaſonable we are.

Now if all this be ſo, if reaſon has ſo little, and ignorance, paſſion, intereſt, and cuſtom ſo much to do, in forming our opinions and our habits, and in directing the whole conduct of human life; is it not a thing deſirable by every thinking man, to have the opportunity, indulged to ſo few by the courſe of accidents, the opportunity "ſecum eſſe, et ſecum vivere," of living ſome years at leaſt to ourſelves, and for ourſelves, in a ſtate of freedom, under the laws of reaſon, inſtead of paſſing our whole time in a ſtate of vaſſalage under thoſe of authority and cuſtom? Is it not worth our while to contemplate ourſelves, and others, and all the things of this world, once before we leave them, through the medium of pure, and, if I may ſay ſo, of undefiled reaſon? Is it not worth our while to approve or condemn, on our own authority, what we re-

ceive in the beginning of life on the authority of other men, who were not then better able to judge for us, than we are now to judge for ourſelves?

That this may be done, and has been done to ſome degree, by men who remained much more mingled than I deſign to be for the future, in the company and buſineſs of the world, I ſhall not deny: but ſtill it is better done in retreat, and with greater eaſe and pleaſure. Whilſt we remain in the world, we are all fettered down, more or leſs, to one common level, and have neither all the leiſure, nor all the means and advantages, to ſoar above it, which we may procure to ourſelves, by breaking theſe fetters, in retreat. To talk of abſtracting ourſelves from matter, laying aſide body, and being reſolved, as it were, into pure intellect, is proud, metaphyſical, unmeaning jargon: but to abſtract ourſelves from the prejudices, and habits, and pleaſures, and buſineſs of the world, is no more than many are, tho all are not, capable of doing. They who can do this, may elevate their ſouls in retreat to an higher ſtation, and may take from thence ſuch a view of the world, as the ſecond Scipio took in his dream, from the ſeats of the bleſſed, when the whole earth appeared ſo little to him, that he could ſcarce diſcern that ſpeck of dirt, the Roman empire. Such a view as this will encreaſe our knowledge by ſhewing us our ignorance; will diſtinguiſh every degree of probability from the loweſt to the higheſt, and mark the diſtance between that and certainty; will diſpel the intoxicating fumes of philoſophical preſumption, and teach us to eſtabliſh our peace of mind, where alone it can reſt ſecurely, in reſignation: in ſhort, ſuch a view will render life more agreeable, and death leſs terrible. Is not this buſineſs, my lord? Is not this pleaſure too, the higheſt pleaſure? The world can afford us none ſuch; we muſt retire from the world

world to taſte it with a full guſt; but we ſhall taſte it the better for having been in the world. The ſhare of ſenſual pleaſures, that a man of my age can promiſe himſelf, is hardly worth attention: he ſhould be ſated, he will be ſoon diſabled; and very little reflection ſurely will ſuffice, to make his habits of this kind loſe their power over him, in proportion at leaſt as his power of indulging them diminiſhes. Beſides, your lordſhip knows that my ſcheme of retirement excludes none of theſe pleaſures that can be taken with decency and conveniency; and to ſay the truth, I believe that I allow myſelf more in ſpeculation, than I ſhall find I want in practice. As to the habits of buſineſs, they can have no hold on one who has been ſo long tired with it. You may object, that tho a man has diſcarded theſe habits, and has not even the embers of ambition about him to revive them, yet he cannot renounce all public buſineſs as abſolutely as I ſeem to do; becauſe a better principle, a principle of duty, may ſummon him to the ſervice of his country. I will anſwer you with great ſincerity. No man has higher notions of this duty than I have. I think that ſcarce any age, or circumſtances, can diſcharge us entirely from it; no, not my own. But as we are apt to take the impulſe of our own paſſions, for a call to the performance of this duty; ſo when theſe paſſions impel us no longer, the call that puts us upon action muſt be real, and loud too. Add to this, that there are different methods, proportioned to different circumſtances and ſituations, of performing the ſame duty. In the midſt of retreat, where ever it may be fixed, I may contribute to defend and preſerve the Britiſh conſtitution of government: and you, my lord, may depend upon me, that whenever I can, I will. Should any one aſk you, in this caſe, from whom I expect my reward? Anſwer him by declaring to whom I pay this ſervice;

vice; "Deo immortali, qui me non accipere modo haec a "majoribus voluit, ſed etiam poſteris prodere."

But, to lead the life I propoſe with ſatisfaction and profit, renouncing the pleaſures and buſineſs of the world, and breaking the habits of both, is not ſufficient: the ſupine creature whoſe underſtanding is ſuperficially employed, through life, about a few general notions, and is never bent to a cloſe and ſteddy purſuit of truth, may renounce the pleaſures and buſineſs of the world, for even in the buſineſs of the world we ſee ſuch creatures often employed, and may break the habits; nay he may retire and drone away life in ſolitude, like a monk, or like him over the door of whoſe houſe, as if his houſe had been his tomb, ſomebody writ, "Here lies ſuch an one." But no ſuch man will be able to make the true uſe of retirement. The employment of his mind, that would have been agreeble and eaſy if he had accuſtomed himſelf to it early, will be unpleaſant and impracticable late: ſuch men loſe their intellectual powers for want of exerting them, and, having trifled away youth, are reduced to the neceſſity of trifling away age. It fares with the mind juſt as it does with the body. He who was born with a texture of brain as ſtrong as that of Newton, may become unable to perform the common rules of arithmetic: juſt as he who has the ſame elaſticity in his muſcles, the ſame ſuppleneſs in his joints, and all his nerves and ſinews as well braced as Jacob Hall, may, become a fat unwieldy ſluggard. Yet farther, the implicit creature, who has thought it all his life needleſs, or unlawful, to examine the principles or facts that he took originally on truſt, will be as little able as the other, to improve his ſolitude to any good purpoſe: unleſs we call it a good purpoſe, for that ſometimes happens, to confirm and exalt his prejudices, ſo that he may live

live and die in one continued delirium. The confirmed prejudices of a thoughtful life are as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life: and as ſome muſt trifle away age becauſe they have trifled away youth, others muſt labor on in a maze of error, becauſe they have wandered there too long to find their way out.

THERE is a prejudice in China in favor of little feet, and therefore the feet of girls are ſwathed and bound up from the cradle, ſo that the women of that country are unable to walk without tottering and ſtumbling all their lives. Among the ſavages of America, there are ſome who hold flat heads and long ears in great eſteem, and therefore preſs the one, and draw down the others ſo hard from their infancy, that they deſtroy irrecoverably the true proportions o nature, and continue all their lives ridiculous to every ſight but their own. Juſt ſo, the firſt of theſe characters cannot make any progreſs, and the ſecond will not attempt to make any, in an impartial ſearch after real knowledge.

To ſet about acquiring the habits of meditation and ſtudy late in life, is like getting into a go-cart with a grey beard, and learning to walk when we have loſt the uſe of our legs. In general, the foundations of an happy old age muſt be laid in youth: and in particular, he who has not cultivated his ſeaſon young, will be utterly unable to improve it old. "Ma-
"nent ingenia ſenibus, modo permaneant ſtudium et induſtria."

NOT only a love of ſtudy, and a deſire of knowledge, muſt have grown up with us, but ſuch an induſtrious application likewiſe, as requires the whole vigor of the mind to be exerted in the purſuit of truth, through long trains of ideas, and all thoſe dark receſſes wherein man, not God, has hid it.

THIS

This love and this deſire I have felt all my life, and I am not quite a ſtranger to this induſtry and application. There has been ſomething always ready to whiſper in my ear, whilſt I ran the courſe of pleaſure and of buſineſs,

"Solve ſeneſcentem mature ſanus equum."

But my genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whiſpered ſo ſoftly, that very often I heard him not, in the hurry of thoſe paſſions by which I was tranſported. Some calmer hours there were: in them I hearkened to him. Reflection had often it's turn, and the love of ſtudy and the deſire of knowledge have never quite abandoned me. I am not therefore entirely unprepared for the life I will lead, and it is not without reaſon that I promiſe myſelf more ſatisfaction in the latter part of it, than I ever knew in the former.

Your lordſhip may think this perhaps a little too ſanguine, for one who has loſt ſo much time already: you may put me in mind, that human life has no ſecond ſpring, no ſecond ſummer: you may aſk me, what I mean by ſowing in autumn, and whether I hope to reap in winter? My anſwer will be, that I think very differently from moſt men, of the time we have to paſs, and the buſineſs we have to do in this world. I think we have more of one, and leſs of the other, than is commonly ſuppoſed. Our want of time, and the ſhortneſs of human life, are ſome of the principal common-place complaints, which we prefer againſt the eſtabliſhed order of things: they are the grumblings of the vulgar, and the pathetic lamentations of the philoſopher; but they are impertinent and impious in both. The man of buſineſs deſpiſes the man of pleaſure, for ſquandering his time away; the man of pleaſure pities or laughs at the man of buſineſs, for the ſame

thing: and yet both concur ſupercilioufly and abſurdly to find fault with the Supreme Being, for having given them ſo little time. The philoſopher, who miſpends it very often as much as the others, joins in the ſame cry, and authoriſes this impiety. THEOPHRASTUS thought it extremely hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had juſt learned how to live in it. His maſter ARISTOTLE found fault with nature, for treating man in this reſpect worſe than ſeveral other animals: both very unphiloſophically! and I love SENECA the better for his quarrel with the Stagirite on this head. We ſee, in ſo many inſtances, a juſt proportion of things, according to their ſeveral relations to one another, that philoſophy ſhould lead us to conclude this proportion preſerved, even where we cannot diſcern it; inſtead of leading us to conclude that it is not preſerved where we do not diſcern it, or where we think that we ſee the contrary. To conclude otherwiſe, is ſhocking preſumption. It is to preſume that the ſyſtem of the univerſe would have been more wiſely contrived, if creatures of our low rank among intellectual natures had been called to the councils of the Moſt High; or that the Creator ought to mend his work by the advice of the creature. That life which ſeems to our ſelf-love ſo ſhort, when we compare it with the ideas we frame of eternity, or even with the duration of ſome other beings, will appear ſufficient, upon a leſs partial view, to all the ends of our creation, and of a juſt proportion in the ſucceſſive courſe of generations. The term itſelf is long: we render it ſhort; and the want we complain of flows from our profuſion, not from our poverty. We are all arrant ſpendthrifts; ſome of us diſſipate our eſtates on the trifles, ſome on the ſuperfluities, and then we all complain that we want the neceſſaries, of life. The much greateſt part never reclaim, but die bankrupts to GOD and man. Others reclaim late, and they are apt to imagine,

gine, when they make up their accounts and ſee how their fund is diminiſhed, that they have not enough remaining to live upon, becauſe they have not the whole. But they deceive themſelves: they were richer than they thought, and they are not yet poor. If they huſband well the remainder, it will be found ſufficient for all the neceſſaries, and for ſome of the ſuperfluities, and trifles too perhaps, of life: but then the former order of expence muſt be inverted; and the neceſſaries of life muſt be provided, before they put themſelves to any coſt for the trifles or ſuperfluities.

Let us leave the men of pleaſure and of buſineſs, who are often candid enough to own that they throw away their time, and thereby to confeſs that they complain of the Supreme Being for no other reaſon than this, that he has not proportioned his bounty to their extravagance: let us conſider the ſcholar and the philoſopher; who, far from owning that he throws any time away, reproves others for doing it: that ſolemn mortal, who abſtains from the pleaſures, and declines the buſineſs of the world, that he may dedicate his whole time to the ſearch of truth, and the improvement of knowledge. When ſuch an one complains of the ſhortneſs of human life in general, or of his remaining ſhare in particular; might not a man, more reaſonable tho leſs ſolemn, expoſtulate thus with him?

"Your complaint is indeed conſiſtent with your practice; "but you would not, poſſibly, renew your complaint if you "reviewed your practice. Tho reading makes a ſcholar; yet "every ſcholar is not a philoſopher, nor every philoſopher a "wiſe man. It coſt you twenty years to devour all the vo-"lumes on one ſide of your library: you came out a great "critic in Latin and Greek, in the oriental tongues, in hiſto-

"ry

" ry and chronology; but you was not ſatisfied: you con-
" feſſed that theſe were the " literae nihil ſanantes;" and you
" wanted more time to acquire other knowledge. You have
" had this time: you have paſſed twenty years more on the
" other ſide of your library, among philoſophers, rabbies,
" commentators, ſchoolmen, and whole legions of modern
" doctors. You are extremely well verſed in all that has been
" written concerning the nature of GOD, and of the ſoul of
" man; about matter and form, body and ſpirit; and ſpace,
" and eternal eſſences, and incorporeal ſubſtances; and the
" reſt of thoſe profound ſpeculations. You are a maſter of the
" controverſies that have ariſen about nature and grace, about
" predeſtination and free will, and all the other abſtruſe queſ-
" tions that have made ſo much noiſe in the ſchools, and done
" ſo much hurt in the world. You are going on, as faſt as
" the infirmities you have contracted will permit, in the ſame
" courſe of ſtudy; but you begin to foreſee that you ſhall
" want time, and you make grievous complaints of the ſhort-
" neſs of human life. Give me leave now to aſk you, how
" many thouſand years God muſt prolong your life, in order
" to reconcile you to his wiſdom and goodneſs? It is plain,
" at leaſt highly probable, that a life as long as that of the
" moſt aged of the patriarchs, would be too ſhort to anſwer
" your purpoſes; ſince the reſearches and diſputes in which
" you are engaged, have been already for a much longer
" time the objects of learned enquiries, and remain ſtill as
" imperfect and undetermined as they were at firſt. But let
" me aſk you again, and deceive neither yourſelf nor me;
" Have you, in the courſe of theſe forty years, once examin-
" ed the firſt principles, and the fundamental facts, on which
" all thoſe queſtions depend, with an abſolute indifference of
" judgment, and with a ſcrupulous exactneſs? with the ſame
" that you have employed in examining the various conſe-

" quences drawn from them, and the heterodox opinions about
" them? Have you not taken them for granted, in the whole
" courſe of your ſtudies? Or, if you have looked now and
" then on the ſtate of the proofs brought to maintain them,
" have you not done it as a mathematician looks over a de-
" monſtrati n formerly made, to refreſh his memory, not to
" ſatisfy any doubt? If you have thus examined, it may ap-
" pear marvellous to ſome, that you have ſpent ſo much time
" in many parts of thoſe ſtudies, which have reduced you to
" this hectic condition, of ſo much heat and weakneſs. But
" if you have not thus examined, it muſt be evident to all,
" nay to yourſelf on the leaſt cool reflection, that you are
" ſtill, notwithſtanding all your learning, in a ſtate of igno-
" rance. For knowledge can alone produce knowledge: and
" without ſuch an examination of axioms and facts, you can
" have none about inferences."

In this manner one might expoſtulate very reaſonably with many a great ſcholar, many a profound philoſopher, many a dogmatical caſuiſt. And it ſerves to ſet the complaints about want of time, and the ſhortneſs of human life, in a very ridiculous but a true light. All men are taught their opinions, at leaſt on the moſt important ſubjects, by rote; and are bred to defend them with obſtinacy. They may be taught true opinions; but whether true or falſe, the ſame zeal for them, and the ſame attachment to them, is every where inſpired alike. The Tartar believes as heartily that the ſoul of Foe inhabits in his Dairo, as the Chriſtian believes the hypoſtatic union, or any article in the Athanaſian creed. Now this may anſwer the ends of ſociety in ſome reſpects, and do well enough for the vulgar of all ranks: but it is not enough for the man who cultivates his reaſon, who is able to think, and who ought to think, for himſelf.

himſelf. To ſuch a man, every opinion that he has not himſelf either framed, or examined ſtrictly, and then adopted, will paſs for nothing more than what it really is, the opinion of other men; which may be true or falſe for aught he knows. And this is a ſtate of uncertainty, in which no ſuch man can remain, with any peace of mind, concerning thoſe things that are of greateſt importance to us here, and may be ſo hereafter. He will make them therefore the objects of his firſt and greateſt attention. If he has loſt time, he will loſe no more; and when he has acquired all the knowledge he is capable of acquiring on theſe ſubjects, he will be the leſs concerned whether he has time to acquire any farther. Should he have paſſed his life in the pleaſures or buſineſs of the world; whenever he ſets about this work, he will ſoon have the advantage over the learned philoſopher. For he will ſoon have ſecured what is neceſſary to his happineſs, and may ſit down in the peaceful enjoyment of that knowledge: or proceed with greater advantage and ſatisfaction to the acquiſition of new knowledge; whilſt the other continues his ſearch after things that are in their nature, to ſay the beſt of them, hypothetical, precarious, and ſuperfluous.

BUT this is not the only rule, by obſerving of which we may redeem our time, and have the advantage over thoſe who imagine they have ſo much in point of knowledge over your lordſhip or me, for inſtance, and who deſpiſe our ignorance. The rule I mean is this; to be on our guard againſt the common arts of deluſion, ſpoken of already; which, every one is ready to confeſs, have been employed to miſlead thoſe who differ from him. Let us be diffident of ourſelves, but let us be diffident of others too: our own paſſions may lead us to reaſon wrong; but the paſſions and intereſt of others may have the ſame effect. It is in every man's power, who ſets about

it in good earneſt, to prevent the firſt: and when he has done ſo, he will have a conſcious certainty of it. To prevent the laſt, there is one, and but one ſure method; and that is, to remount, in the ſurvey of our opinions, to the firſt and even remoteſt principles on which they are founded. No reſpect, no habit, no ſeeming certainty whatever, muſt divert us from this; any affectation of diverting us from it ought to increaſe our ſuſpicion: and the more important our examination is, the more important this method of conducting it becomes. Let us not be frighted from it, either by the ſuppoſed difficulty or length of ſuch an enquiry; for, on the contrary, this is the eaſieſt and the ſhorteſt, as well as the only ſure way of arriving at real knowledge; and of being able to place the opinions we examine in the different claſſes of true, probable, or falſe, according to the truth, probability, or falſhood of the principles from whence they are deduced. If we find theſe principles falſe, and that will be the caſe in many inſtances, we ſtop our enquiries on theſe heads at once; and ſave an immenſe deal of time that we ſhould otherwiſe miſpend. The Muſſulman who enters on the examination of all the diſputes that have ariſen between the followers of Omar and Ali and other doctors of his law, muſt acquire a thorough knowledge of the whole Mahometan ſyſtem; and will have as good a right to complain of want of time, and the ſhortneſs of human life, as any pagan or Chriſtian divine or philoſopher: but without all this time and learning, he might have diſcovered that Mahomet was an impoſtor, and that the Koran is an heap of abſurdities.

In ſhort, my lord, he who retires from the world, with a reſolution of employing his leiſure, in the firſt place to re-examine and ſettle his opinions, is inexcuſable if he does not begin with thoſe that are moſt important to him, and if he does not deal honeſtly by himſelf. To deal honeſtly by himſelf, he muſt

muſt obſerve the rule I have inſiſted upon, and not ſuffer the deluſions of the world to follow him into his retreat. Every man's reaſon is every man's oracle: this oracle is beſt conſulted in the ſilence of retirement; and when we have ſo conſulted, whatever the deciſion be, whether in favor of our prejudices or againſt them, we muſt reſt ſatisfied: ſince nothing can be more certain than this, that he who follows that guide in the ſearch of truth, as that was given him to lead him to it, will have a much better plea to make, whenever or wherever he may be called to account, than he, who has reſigned himſelf, either deliberately or inadvertently, to any authority upon earth.

WHEN we have done this, concerning GOD, ourſelves, and other men; concerning the relations in which we ſtand to him and to them; the duties that reſult from theſe relations; and the poſitive will of the Supreme Being, whether revealed to us in a ſupernatural, or diſcovered by the right uſe of our reaſon in a natural way----we have done the great buſineſs of our lives. Our lives are ſo ſufficient for this, that they afford us time for more, even when we begin late: eſpecially if we proceed in every other enquiry by the ſame rule. To diſcover error in axioms, or in firſt principles grounded on facts, is like the breaking of a charm. The enchanted caſtle, the ſteepy rock, the burning lake diſappear: and the paths that lead to truth, which we imagined to be ſo long, ſo embarraſſed, and ſo difficult, ſhew as they are, ſhort, open, and eaſy. When we have ſecured the neceſſaries, there may be time to amuſe ourſelves with the ſuperfluities, and even with the trifles of life. "Dulce eſt deſipere," ſaid HORACE: "Vive la "bagatelle!" ſays SWIFT. I oppoſe neither; not the Epicurean, much leſs the Chriſtian philoſopher: but I inſiſt that a principal part of theſe amuſements be the amuſements of

ſtudy

ſtudy and reflection, of reading and converſation. You know what converſation I mean; for we loſe the true advantage of our nature and conſtitution, if we ſuffer the mind to come, as it were, to a ſtand. When the body, inſtead of acquiring new vigor, and taſting new pleaſures, begins to decline, and is ſated with pleaſures, or grown incapable of taking them, the mind may continue ſtill to improve and indulge itſelf in new enjoyments. Every advance in knowledge opens a new ſcene of delight; and the joy that we feel in the actual poſſeſſion of one, will be heightened by that which we expect to find in another: ſo that, before we can exhauſt this fund of ſucceſſive pleaſures, death will come to end our pleaſures and our pains at once. "In his ſtudiis laboribuſque viventi, non in-"telligitur quando obrepit ſenectus: ita ſenſim ſine ſenſu "aetas ſeneſcit, nec ſubito frangitur, ſed diuturnitate extin-"guitur."

This, my lord, is the wiſeſt, and the moſt agreeable manner in which a man of ſenſe can wind up the thread of life. Happy is he whoſe ſituation and circumſtances give him the opportunity and means of doing it! Tho he ſhould not have made any great advances in knowledge, and ſhould ſet about it late, yet the taſk will not be found difficult, unleſs he has gone too far out of his way; and unleſs he continues too long to halt, between the diſſipations of the world, and the leiſure of a retired life:

-----Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Ruſticus expectat dum defluat amnis,-----

You know the reſt. I am ſenſible, more ſenſible than any enemy I have, of my natural infirmities, and acquired diſadvantages: but I have begun, and I will perſiſt: for he who jogs

jogs forward on a battered horſe, in the right way, may get to the end of his journey; which he cannot do, who gallops the fleeteſt courſer of New-Market, out of it.

ADIEU, my dear lord. Tho I have much more to ſay on this ſubject, yet I perceive, and I doubt you have long perceived, that I have ſaid too much, at leaſt for a letter, already. The reſt ſhall be reſerved for converſation whenever we meet: and then I hope to confirm, under your lordſhip's eye, my ſpeculations by my practice. In the mean time let me refer you to our friend POPE. He ſays I made a philoſopher of him: I am ſure he has contributed very much, and I thank him for it, to the making an hermit of me.

End of the SECOND VOLUME.

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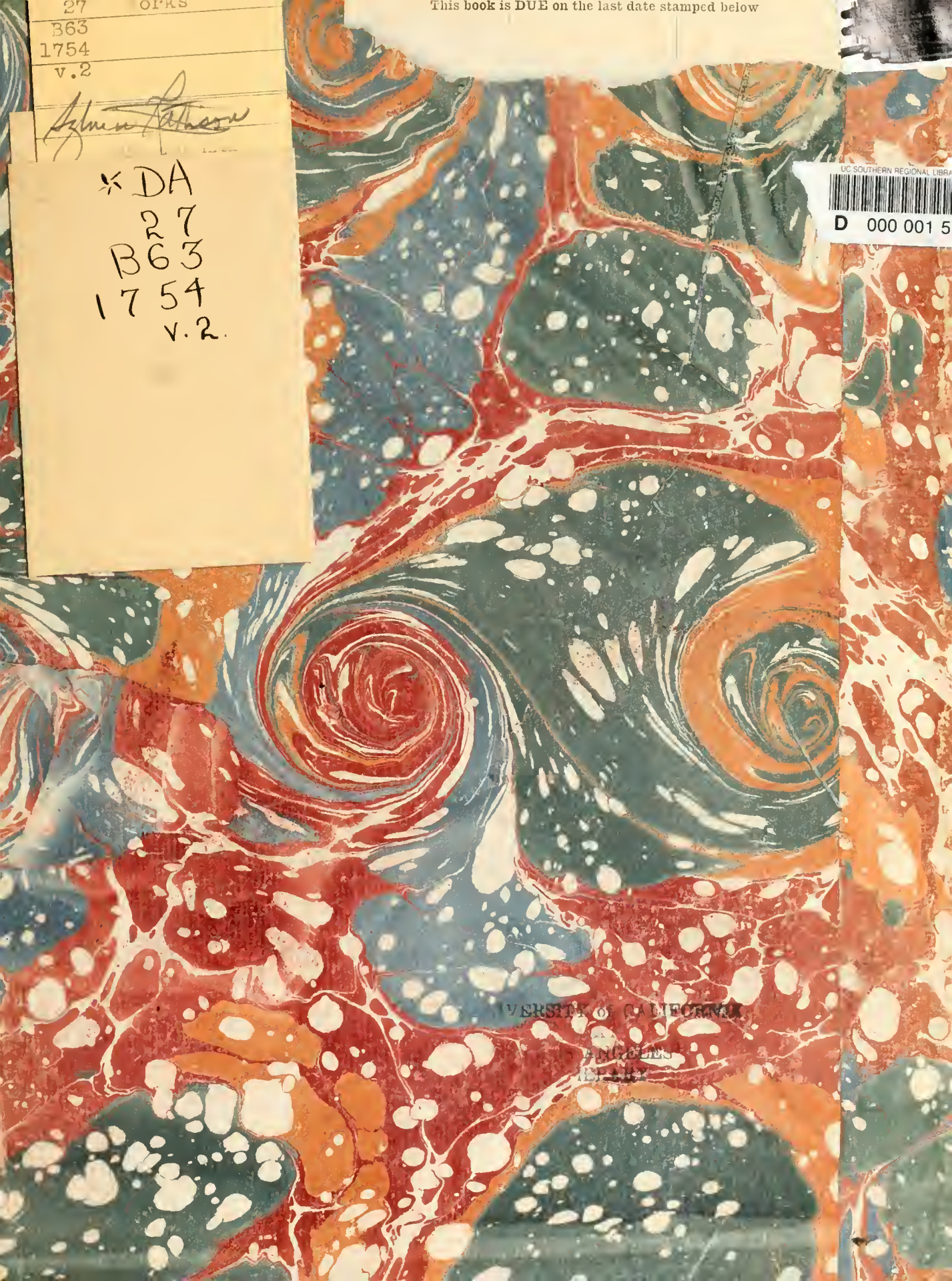
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